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AGNUS DEI.

J. WIMSETT BOULDING.



AGNUS DEI.



# AGNUS DEI.

A Poem

IN EIGHT BOOKS.

By J. WIMSETT BOULDING.

'Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.'—*John*, i. 29.

'These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings.'—*Rev.* xvii. 14.



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## ERRATA.

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Page 40, *omit* full stop in headline.

„ 55, line 2 from bottom, *for* full stop after 'alway' *substitute* a comma.


„ 61, line 11, *for* gleam *read* gleams.

„ 124, line 10, *for* earth so dim, and Heaven was, *read*, earth was so dim, and Heaven.

„ 135, line 3 from bottom, *for* surg *read* surge.

„ 136, *for* Eire *read* Fire.





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AGNUS DEI.

## ARGUMENT.

THE subject proposed—Invocation—The period indicated which the Poem is designed to occupy—A brief review of the Messiah's career—His birth—His childhood—His ministry, with some general remarks upon His character, preparatory to the close of His Messianic work, in which the scene of the Poem is laid—Description of Heaven on the eve of the Messiah's sufferings—The warning sound which announced to the celestials that the hour was approaching—Its effect upon them described—Its effect upon the fallen spirits—They assemble, and proceed to the regions of the air to witness the great conflict—The Palace of Satan described—He comes forth to welcome the infernal army—His address on meeting them—His kingdom and regal state, as Prince of the Power of the Air, described—Its nearness to Heaven enables him to present himself among the angels when they assemble before God—Thus he obtains great insight into God's methods of counteracting his evil works, which methods he counterfeits—The procession of all the angels to the world.

## BOOK I.

**T**HAT WONDROUS CONFLICT which the LAMB OF GOD

In the Judean wilderness began,  
What time the Spirit led Him, new-baptized,  
To strife victorious with the Enemy  
Who saw heaven's windows open, and the Dove  
Descend upon Him from the breast of God ;  
And did for forty days assail Him sore,  
In body, soul, and spirit, though with wound  
But to himself, and foretaste of the blow  
That should his head confound with fatal bruise—  
Conflict by men unnoted, unobserved ;  
But seen of angels, and in glorious quire  
With harps and voices celebrated high,  
When the Old Serpent through the desert slunk,  
And left the Son without or sting or stain :  
That strife sublime my Muse would celebrate  
Amidst the crowning splendours of its close.

Inspire me, Thou, whose sole delight it is  
To take the things of Christ, and glorify  
His Name by showing them to men ! Oh, lead  
My thoughts into this centre truth, of all  
The brightest, but to mortal thought confessed



AGNUS DEI.

And said, 'I have Thee glorified on earth,'  
The track of glory on the world replied,  
'Thou hast.'

That wondrous course its witnesses  
Have in the Book recorded ;—how He lived,  
And loved, and laboured for the good of men,  
In painfulness and tears, in want and woe,  
Pursued by ceaseless scorn and obloquy ;  
And, as the world's rebellion grew more fierce,  
His tenderness more tender growing, till  
His love enthroned itself upon the cross  
Superior to the enmity of men ;  
And in meek triumph o'er their utmost hate  
Drew down the benediction of the skies,  
And set it, like a crown, on the round world,  
To shine for ever to the praise of God.

Nor altogether can the Muse refrain  
From singing the sweet glories of that life—  
His Incarnation—awful mystery !  
That as by woman came the curse, by her,  
Through Nature's sorest grief, should come the Child  
Who should restore the crown to womanhood ;  
And be Himself the only faultless gem  
That motherhood had set on woman's brow.

Fair Gem of Glory ! in whose orb of light  
One looked as into the far depths of heaven,  
So pure and so transparent ; yet so deep

And so sublime in its simplicity!  
For on His face, like sunshine on the sea,  
A childish gladness rippled : but the tone  
Told of the deep beneath ; and Mary heard  
The mystic music, and she pondered it.  
And oft its voice would sound within her heart  
Like waves of ocean echoing in a cave :  
The mother's heart was smaller than the Child's.  
And yet He showed Himself not less her child  
Because He was her Maker. While she bowed  
Beside Him with an angel's reverence,  
She pressed Him to her with a mother's love,  
And felt, oh, thrill of fear and joy! she clasped  
Her babe—her God. He loved and trusted her ;  
Ran to her arms and climbed upon her knee ;  
Wept in her bosom ; listened to her songs ;  
And did her bidding alway. Holy Child !  
The Flower of all existence—Ornament  
Of every stage of life—an infant God  
For infant hearts to love, and to adorn  
Their infant name. His childhood, like a pearl,  
Glowes on the neck of infancy for ever.

His manhood was to His pure infancy  
As the full blossom to the tender bud—  
The opening out of every folded charm—  
Those leaves of promises deposited  
By God and Nature in the flower's sweet breast.  
Years added strength to His young loveliness,



Stealing no charm, but only ripening  
The *life* of Beauty. Native of the skies,  
The heavens looked down and smiled upon their own ;  
Earth caught a fragrance as of fairer worlds ;  
And each rejoicing in His goldening prime,  
He grew in favour with both God and man.

Age never froze the dew on *Him*. His head  
Grew never white, nor did his heart wax old,  
As young hearts often do—withering like grass  
Or hardening to stone—the raven locks  
Waving in funeral pomp, like sable plumes,  
Over a Life which Time is carrying out  
To hopeless, everlasting burial.

But who shall celebrate in equal strains  
The full-blown beauty of His soul, when ripe  
In nature, as in purpose, He came forth  
From His long privacy to show the world  
The glory which had gathered to the full ?  
What wondrous combinations shone in Him !  
Goodness and greatness, strength and gentleness,  
Meekness and might, wisdom and modesty,  
Power that could burn a world to smoke like tow,  
Pity that would not quench the smoking flax,  
A purity that shrank from sin, yet drew  
The sinful to His feet, and held them there,  
A King in His authority, a child  
In His simplicity : in tenderness

A woman, and a man in dignity :  
In both God's image full : a woman soul,  
Clothed with the sun : a heart of gentleness,  
Throned in a blaze of power. For th' Original  
Beholds His likeness in humanity ;  
Not male alone, but male and female, both  
Created He, and made them twain one flesh,  
And saw His face in them that it was good ;  
And Christ was perfect man, because He showed  
In perfect balance all the heart of God.

And who shall venture to recount the deeds  
With which His days were filled ? He lived so fast  
That none could take a note of all He did ;  
And had His acts been written every one  
The world itself had not contained the books.  
For e'en the fragment which has been transcribed —  
A mere quotation from the Living Word —  
The world has failed to compass or contain  
In the small circle of its finite thought ;  
And evermore that fragment will outstretch  
The limited circumference of Time  
Unmeasured, and unmeasurable ; — a heaven  
Of new discovery, encircling men  
As the great, spiritual firmament  
Contains the globe, and leaves it but a speck  
On its unnavigable sea of blue.  
As high as heaven above the earth, so high  
Its heavenly wisdom above earthly thought.

But now His public course was ended—course  
How brief by time computed, but how long  
Measured by deeds!—Eternity's sole rule  
Of calculation of the lives of men.  
And with a sad farewell, as 'twere the sun  
Parting with earth upon the eve of Doom,  
He said: 'But little while the light is yours,  
Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come  
And no man find his way to light again.'  
Thus, having said, He hid Himself. And fell  
The evening shadows on Jerusalem.  
Then struck the horologe of heaven the hour.  
He heard it. And the angels heard it. And  
The heavens grew dark and silent, and a chill  
Shivered through all the worlds; and pallor came  
On every face that erewhile shone so bright,  
And in the depths of heaven's diminished light  
The grouping angels looked like clustered stars,  
Seen dim and shadowy through the misty air.  
Never had such a silence reigned in heaven:  
Never, till now, had Darkness masked her face;  
For there is no night there, nor vagrant cloud  
To dim the round of everlasting day.  
But now the order of the heavenly world  
Changed to its opposite; in sympathy  
With its great Author, who had joined Himself  
To His own opposite—Essential Light  
To Darkness, and Essential Bliss to Pain;  
Essential Wealth to Poverty, and Life

To Death—the great Original eclipsed,  
All Being sat in shadow.

Otherwise

Was it with the Infernal Regions. Soon  
As knelled the signal through the hollow deep,  
Hell rose with clamour dire and devilish zeal.  
Then all was busy haste and boisterousness :  
The hurrying through the deep of mustering ranks ;  
And shouts of leaders giving high command ;  
And roll of chariots ; and tramp of steeds ;  
And clang of arms ; and brazen trumpets' bray ;  
And helmets' rattle ; and the fiery plumes  
Outstreamed like comets in the dismal wind.  
Thousands of spirits sped to join their peers  
From every part of hell's far-stretching coast :  
Like meteor-showers across the vault of night  
Their flight illumed the waste : till, all complete,  
On came the ranks, with firm and solid front ;  
And motion measured as the advancing tide,  
And sound as mighty ; and the heaving mass  
Looked like the midnight ocean ; and their helms  
Flashed in pale triumph, as the crested waves  
Beneath the ghostly moon. Excitement high  
Prevailed among them ; for the coming strife  
Between the Prince of Darkness and God's Son  
Must not unwitnessed be, but seen by all  
The angels, bad and good.

At length they came  
In sight of Lucifer's bright fane, which stood

High in the fields of space—ethereal pile,  
Hung upon nothing, balanced like the clouds,  
With towers of alabaster, jacinth walls,  
And glittering spires of azure and of gold.  
Him they beheld approaching in his car,  
Which harnessed whirlwinds and obedient flames,  
Like fiery coursers, swept along the sky ;  
Each wheel a rolling moon : while he in the midst  
Stood dark as night, and like a full eclipse  
His shadow fell upon each hemisphere  
Of the revolving orbs alternately.

They met : he stayed the massy globes, and cried,  
' All hail ! welcome to these ethereal plains,  
And doubly welcome since ye come for end  
So worthy and sublime ! ' Then, looking round  
Upon the golden splendours with a pride  
Like his who gazed upon great Babylon,  
He cried, ' Behold the wonders of my might ;  
The palace I have builded ; the domain  
I rule ; the lightnings, whirlwinds, clouds, and fires  
That minister around me, and uphold  
My royal state in these unending realms :  
I have ascended into heaven ; my throne  
I have exalted to the stars of God ;  
Son of the Morning, seated in the heights  
Like the Most High, a monarch and a god.  
Like Him, yet unlike— Rival Deity,  
But not a copy : reigning here alone

Supreme in Hate, as He in Love : of Sin  
The great Original, as He of Good ;  
Author of Misery, as He of Bliss ;  
God of a universe distinct from His,  
Though raised within it—the reversal proud  
Of His commandment, when my spirit moved  
Upon the face of the enlightened deep,  
Following the Dove Divine—a Raven black,  
And said, “ Let darkness be, and darkness was.”  
This fair creation which He wove, and wrapt  
Around His essence like a vesture bright,  
I have so rent and marred, that human kind,  
Learning of the Invisible by outward things,  
Have doubted whether the Original  
Was spirit good or evil ; all agreed,  
At least, to own me equal ruler, Night  
And Light so equally contending. See  
These gorgeous realms, ye new-arrived from hell ;  
This sun-built palace see, its throne and state,  
And say if ’twas not worth a fall from heaven  
To re-ascend it in such majesty ?  
Say, am I less than He who sits supreme  
In yon dominions of eternal day ?  
I in eternal darkness as supreme !  
Though in myself not dark. What though the fire  
Of love upon the altar has gone out !  
Yet on the eastern window flames the sun—  
My understanding is all clear and bright ;  
Clear, bright, though cold as winter morn : no heart,

No love, no God, but knowledge, intellect,  
And the whole temple of the mind my own.'  
He ceased ; and through the firmamental dome  
The acclamations of his army rang ;  
While thunders uttered their tremendous voice ;  
And far beneath, the deep, with lifted hands,  
Echoed aloud the general applause.

For since the hour when to these middle realms  
He groped his way from the deep pit of hell,  
And to his empire added the new world,  
Discovered by his enterprising zeal,  
And by him won, he had set up his seat  
In these ærial amplitudes, the god  
Of this world, and the Prince of Powers of air.  
So styled in studied insult to the King  
Who held His court within his envious ken :  
And oft these sunlit halls had echoed loud  
With impious worship, in proud rivalry  
Of Him who worshipped sits upon the throne.  
And oft he had made progress through his realms  
In car of clouds, by furious whirlwinds drawn,  
In imitation of the King who walks  
Upon the wings of tempests, and the waves  
His chariot makes: and oft had hurled his bolts  
Like the great Thunderer ; while Pestilence  
And Famine, Mildew, Blight, fierce Heat, pale Cold,  
And all the evil spirits of the air,  
Waited his bidding. Seldom did he pay

A visit to his old dominion, left  
Under viceregal government, that he might dwell  
In his new empire, and administer,  
Himself, its vast affairs ; and, as the king  
Of some inhospitable clime, become  
Possessed of a fair kingdom in a part  
Of the great globe more genial, might remove  
His court from the extremes of heat and cold  
To its more temperate air and pleasing scenes,  
So he had left the deep domains of Death,  
To rove celestial fields, and 'mong the stars  
To set his sable throne : and oft he walked  
On heaven's own confines, and his shadow fell  
Dark on the golden pavement : and among  
The sons of God, when gathering to present  
Themselves in worship, in the semblant plumes  
Of a pure angel came the Evil One.

Thus had he gained his insight of the mode  
Chosen by God to counteract his wiles,  
And to destroy his works ; and he resolved  
To make his work the counterfeit of God's.  
And many a lying vanity he coined,  
And stamped it with the image of the true ;  
Which, in those ages called in Holy Writ  
The ' times of ignorance,' did current pass  
For genuine gold ; o'erruled by God to be  
The presages and omens of the truth  
To be revealed in fulness of the times :



16     *Enables him to Counterfeit God's Methods.*

But not so meant by *him*, but to engage  
The minds of men, that when the true appeared  
It might not fill them with the great amaze,  
Nor stir them to the overwhelming joy  
Excited by new things, found suddenly ;  
But might the rather seem a version new  
Of an old story, which the world had heard  
From the beginning, and the Truth Himself  
One of the demigods wherewith the world  
Was overflowing. Space would fail to tell  
The fables manifold whereby His work  
Was counterfeited and forestalled ; of gods  
Descending to the earth, men raised to heaven  
Descending to the deep, battling with Death.  
The voice of prophets mimicking by sound  
Of oracle and sibyl, and the arts  
Of witchcraft and of magic : and thus Truth,  
As it came forth from Heaven's pure mint, was matched  
By some resembling lie, that, like base coin,  
Deceived the nations with its speciousness.

Here had he heard that by the influence  
Of ~~the~~ good Spirit, dwelling in the Son,  
God would destroy the Devil's evil works ;  
And straight he turned his knowledge to account,  
And sent more evil spirits into men.  
And when the Son of God began His work,  
Anointed with the Holy One, He saw  
Irruption vast of demon influence :

Devils, both deaf and dumb, in multitudes  
Confronted Him. Some, solitary, came,  
And some in legions came—a host of spirits  
Lodged in one soul, as in a tower of hell.  
Some flamed like fire before Him, and some stood  
Dismal and moody as the stolid night.  
That time of God's appearing might be called  
The Devil's day of incarnation, too.

Now did the holy Angels who, meanwhile,  
With fear and wonder motionless had stood,  
Begin their solemn journey to the cross—  
A cross or throne, 'twas all the same to them;  
For God was God, nor could be less nor more.  
In twos they went, nor spoke but only sighed ;  
Each looked his soul into the other's face.  
Slow were their steps, for wings they used none,  
But folded them : 'twas like a funeral train  
Passing through heaven—sight never seen before.  
Two days the sorrowful procession passed,  
So great their numbers and so slow their pace.

As the sad train arrived, each took his stand  
Around the woeful place : the mighty cloud  
Compassed the city with its living gloom ;  
And had the eyes of men been openèd,  
As were Elisha's servant's, they had seen  
The mountains round about Jerusalem  
Filling with witnesses as heaven with stars :

66 c

Their myriad eyes bright, burning like the stars ;  
The mournful mass black as the heaven by night.  
Never was their intelligence so keen,  
Never their hearts so low and sorrowful.

## BOOK II.

## ARGUMENT.

THE kingdom of the world the ultimate object of the Messiah's advent—His sufferings the divinely appointed means of putting away sin, by which the Evil One had usurped that kingdom—The Redeemer's consciousness of the royal destiny that awaited Him—The object of Satan's temptations to turn Him aside from the sufferings, offering to give Him the kingdom without them; thus proposing the same end, but substituting other means—The difference between the kingdom as promised by Satan and that promised by the Father: the one a kingdom carnal and temporal, the other spiritual and eternal—Having failed in accomplishing his purpose, Satan summons his Council to consult as to the best mode of assailing Him further—He explains the methods formerly adopted, and proposes to try the effect of the vision of the kingdoms of the world and their glory, amidst the hour of suffering which He seems resolved to enter upon—One of his peers approves; another proposes that His means shall be made their means, and that His sufferings shall be infinitely multiplied and aggravated—Upon which Satan compliments him for his ingenuity, but declares that he has long ago anticipated his counsel, only reserving this as his last resort if the wiles of the serpent should fail—The assembly rises—Jesus on a mountain in prayer—Night—A storm—Satan descends in a flash of lightning—Jesus accosts him—Satan expresses his astonishment that Christ should make so great sacrifice for man, quoting the language of the Psalmist—Jesus replies by adducing God's care for His creatures, and draws the inference that He will therefore care more for His children—Satan objects to the doctrine that God always cares for His children, and with great impertinence adduces himself as an illustration of the validity of his objection—Jesus shows that he is no longer God's child, because the Godlike nature is destroyed within him, and therefore is incapable of being the object of such care as that evinced in Redemption; and in defence of man points out the difference between the Author of sin and the Victim of sin—Satan, at first confused, at length replies with disdain, and flies away—Morning—The souls of the holy infants are brought to the Saviour by guardian angels—Adam comes with them—Their song of adoration—They depart—Adam remains behind—He pays his homage to Christ as the second Adam—Bewails his sin and the loss of Eden to his posterity—Jesus comforts him, by showing him how God has brought good out of evil, greater blessedness to man, and greater glory to Himself—He further explains the immediate benefit which His approaching triumph will confer on him and all the faithful dead—Points him also to the final blessedness at His second advent, and the restitution of all things, and ends by giving him a view of the world at the Millennium—the New Jerusalem, and the Son's Bride.

## BOOK II.

**T**HROUGH all the dark and changeful course of Time  
The Promise shed its clear and steady light  
Upon the world's tempestuous waters, calm  
And steadfast as the Star, which in the North  
Hangs like a lamp on the high gate of Heaven—  
The Promise of a Kingdom where Deceit  
And Violence, Cupidity and Lust,  
Should be no longer known; whose officers  
Should all be Peace; exactors Righteousness;  
Where slaves should grow to men, and despots shrink  
To the same stature; where the warrior's arms  
Should be transformed to implements of peace,  
And war be learned no more—the fiercest spirits  
Subjected, and gentleness be crowned  
King of the world—the wolf and leopard dwell  
Each with the lamb and kid, and by a child  
Be led—that Monarch-Child, the Holy Child,  
The Child-Man Jesus Christ; whose gentleness  
Was but the hiding of His power; the calm  
Of the Divine sufficiency and strength.

Upon that Child all names and dignities  
Had been accumulated—David's Son,

And Lord, The Mighty God, The Prince of Peace,  
The Father of the Everlasting Age.

Seer after seer had caught the strain, and cried  
Each to the other like the seraphim :

And harp to harp responsive rang ; and age  
Echoed to age,—each adding to the song :

Upon His shoulder shall the government  
Be set, and of its increase there shall be  
No end ; and all the glory of the house  
Of David shall be given to Him : the sea  
Shall its abundance yield Him ; and the isles  
Wait for His law ; they in the wilderness  
Shall bow before Him ; and the barren wastes  
Blossom with an eternal loveliness ;  
And Famine, Blight, and Pestilence depart,  
And all the bliss of Paradise return.

Nor did the Prophet-bards forbear to sing  
The sufferings of the Anointed One of God—  
His visage marred above all other men's ;  
His form without the comeliness which men  
Call beauty ; disesteemed, despised, oppressed ;  
Taken from prison and from judgment ; stripped  
Of all His garments ; bowing down His back  
To the rude plowers, who made long and deep  
Their furrows ; giving His fair cheeks to those  
Who plucked off the hair, and like a lamb  
Led to the slaughter by the butcher hands  
That gave Him gall for meat, and vinegar

For drink, and pierced His hands and feet,  
And raised Him to that solitude of woe  
Where, in His all-surpassing agony,  
He won the unchallengeable title of  
The Man of Sorrows. But the lines of grief  
In the sun-blaze of diamond and gold;  
Were lost; few saw the careworn face on which,  
As on the mountain's rugged brow, snow-crowned,  
The heavens had set their peerless diadem.

Nor ignorant of the recompense was He ;  
The joy before Him set, throughout His course  
Shone like the prize before the runner, and  
His soul the prospect fired : for He had read  
The Law, the Psalms, and all the Prophecies,  
And beyond measure with the Spirit filled,  
He knew what things were writ concerning Him,  
And knew He was the Sun of Righteousness—  
Source of the glory which the Prophets saw  
Flooding the end of time.

Therefore, when came  
The Devil, and the Kingdoms of the World  
Laid, tempting, at His feet, He recognised  
The picture which the ancient seers had drawn  
And felt the charm ; but, by the Spirit lit  
Who led Him out into the wilderness,  
To start Him on the Kingdom's rugged road,  
He saw 'twas but the worthless counterfeit  
Of the true Glory promised ; nor more like



The Kingdom of the Father, than the Fiend  
Was like the Angels in whose robes he came.  
The Imitation set before THE TRUTH,  
Melted away; as fled the Incarnate Lie  
Before the Incarnate Majesty of God.

Now had the Tempter summoned all his peers  
To hold debate. To the ethereal hall  
In haste they came. Each to his own place went,  
And quickly every seat was filled. August  
Assembly! principalities and powers,  
And rulers of the darkness of the world,  
And wicked spirits in heavenly places throned.

Upon the Devil's entering, all rose up  
And greeted him. The sound was as when waves  
Thundering, fall prostrate, and salute the rocks.  
Then, stretching forth his hand, the Prince began :—  
' Thrones and Dominions, to my words give ear :  
Ye can attest my diligence to entice  
Our enemy to accept a worldly throne,  
And to renounce that path of suffering,  
In the mysterious counsels of the Heavens,  
Ordained to work His glory, and the fall  
Of this, our new-won empire. Day by day,  
In divers forms, I have the inducement tried,  
And painted my illusions on His dreams.  
The Prophets I have cited, and the Psalms  
Chanted with feignèd reverence in His ear ;

And with a courage which His stern repulse,  
Daily administered, has ne'er subdued,  
I have pursued my purpose since the hour  
When He began His ministry, and I  
Solicited His soul — to suffering new —  
To abjure a desert-life, whose earliest taste  
Had proved so bitter, for a life of ease,  
Thus saying : " If Thou be the Son of God,  
No longer hunger in the wilderness,  
But turn these stones to bread ! Leap boldly down  
From this high pinnacle on which Thou'rt set,  
And in Thy Temple suddenly appear ;  
From Temple mount to Throne, borne by the tide  
Of the uprising people. Take the world  
Just as it is, in gorgeous vision now  
Passing before Thy face ! For mine it is —  
Its power and glory multitudinous —  
One act of homage and it shall be Thine !  
No need for waiting, and for suffering none —  
A bended knee and Thine are all its crowns."  
All my devices one intention had —  
To turn Him from the desert's chosen path,  
Taking His kingdom at your Master's price,  
As other rulers of the earth have done —  
Its hundred kings, my vassals, and my slaves.  
But this His answer — only, alway this —  
" Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God, whose Throne  
Is not of this world, nor His title won  
By this world's policy, but built on Truth,

Which is the SUBSTANCE—all *thy* world a show."  
Then pointed out to me Another World,  
Which, like a continent seen through a haze,  
Beyond the Phantasm reared its hills of light.  
I saw it not. I saw but what I raised.  
"The god of this world is grown blind," He said,  
"And knows no more what once he knew so well."  
And in the contemplation of that scene  
Invisible, I left Him to His own,  
And fled to mine, and my Illusion fled.  
But 'mid the sorrow which He will not shun,  
Whatever its mysterious elements '  
(Not by the Evil Spirit the mind of Christ  
Discerned, or sinless suffering understood,  
To holy angels even, past finding out),  
'He may unbend His awful fortitude  
And yield to the enticement. Therefore, on  
That Solid Darkness be the brilliant scene  
Painted in magic hues unparalleled,  
If haply the new pageant may allure  
When suffering bids Him yearn for ease and rest.'

He ceased ; but scarce had ceased ere one arose  
Of thoughtful brow, and said,—'How strange such words  
To ears infernal sound ; woe to inflict  
Our one perpetual work, pain to prevent  
Never our aim before ; but God's strange plans  
Make devils do things strange, and contrary  
To their accustomed methods. Thus He turns

Our work against ourselves, and with our sword  
Pierces us through : all suffering came from us,  
Now healing comes from it, and it is made  
To have such virtue that our whole design  
Is to prevent what we the most have sought.  
Which of us thought when sorrow came on men  
It would be turned to such a wondrous use  
And efficacy, through the exceeding grief  
Of One All-suffering Man, that evermore  
It would be banished from the universe,  
And we be left the chief inheritors  
Of that we had created ? Ill it suits  
My vengeful disposition to avert  
Suffering from any, least of all from Him —  
Our greatest enemy ; but wisdom checks  
Our hasty vengeance, bids the sevenfold fire  
Consume itself within us ; for this heat  
Of rage suppressed, though painful, may work us  
Advantage ultimate ; and when God takes  
A course which seems contrary to Himself  
(Suffering must be His opposite who is  
By eminence the Blessed), we must choose  
The course which is *our* opposite, to turn  
His soul aside from the dark path of grief,  
And break Divine Companionship with pain.'  
He ended, and the half-dissentient looks  
Which his first words produced had slowly lit  
Into a warm approval ; when he ceased,  
The applause that broke from every side proclaimed

The assent was universal. One except,  
Who different counsel gave, and thus he spake :—

‘ To me there seems no reason to depart  
From our accustomed course. If sorrow be  
His chosen means, then be it ours to make  
His sorrow serve our ends. To mar the work  
Is easier than to change the Worker’s plan;  
On suffering His soul is resolute,  
And, doubtless, will resist each bold attempt  
To change His purpose; but we may so vex  
His righteous spirit in the enterprise,  
That in a storm of passion whirled away,  
He may cast down His work, as Moses flung  
The sacred tables on the mountain-side,  
And made a ruin of the Law of God.  
To make His work a ruin, and Himself  
The Ruiner, will be a victory  
Greater than to divert Him from the attempt.  
His own words, then, we may fling back at Him  
With keen retort: “ What man that goeth forth  
To war against his foe, doth not sit down  
And calculate his strength, lest he should fall  
Before the opposing force? or who that seeks  
To build a tower doth not reckon first  
The extent of his resources, lest he fail  
To raise the structure, and men say in scorn,  
This man began to build, and left the walls  
For birds of night to roost in?” We, those Birds,

Shrieking our hellish triumph evermore  
Around the mighty ruin !'

As he paused,  
Such thunderous tumult of applause burst forth  
That the vast hall resounded, and heaven shook ;  
And all the fiends outstretched and flapped their wings,  
And shrieked with triumph loud, as if they saw  
The Desolation standing in their midst,  
And they were tenants of God's work destroyed.

All eyes were turned towards Satan now, his thoughts  
On this advice inquiring. Seeing which  
He rose, and thus discoursed :—' The sage device  
Is worthy its sublime intelligence,  
Though long determined in your sovereign's mind.  
For since the hour of the mysterious curse—  
The woman's Seed shall bruise the serpent's head—  
I have devised my instruments of death ;  
And in the depths of hell the elements  
For a tremendous conflict I have stored  
Against the day of battle. On my word  
A resurrection of such horrors waits  
As hell has never seen. Whatever be  
The sufferings which, as sacrifice for sin,  
His spirit pure designs, I will so add  
Both to their number and their bitterness  
That, 'mid the unanticipated fear,  
His human soul shall shrink To tempt I deemed  
The easier mode ; for pleasure, glory, wealth,

30 *Satan's Reply, in which he reveals his Purpose.*

Have ever been our surest instruments  
In overcoming men ; but should these fail,  
Woes that ne'er yet assailed the soul of man,  
The worst that devilish malignity and power  
Can generate, shall hell, upgathering, pour  
In universal tempest on His head.  
He little knows the depths of Satan, if  
He judges me by the soft flatteries  
And blandishments wherewith I have till now  
Approached Him, serpent-like. Let Him go forth  
Into the wine-press of His sacrifice,  
And there shall Satan, undisguised, appear  
The great and dreadful being that he is.  
He is no ruined angel who can thus  
Prepare to meet the Almighty Thunderer ;  
Nor shall be less in battle than device  
And preparation, as He soon shall know.  
Stranger am I to fear, who spoiled of old  
The Maker's works when in Omnipotence  
He did create the worlds, and took the robe  
Which He had woven for His essence bright,  
And wrapt it round my dark magnificence,  
The while ye crowned me with this starry round,  
King of the fallen earth, Heaven's Conqueror,  
And your King doubly, nor can be subdued  
By One who comes with the infirmity  
And limitation of a man !' He ceased,  
And in his countenance defiance sat ;  
For man was lower than the angels made,

And God was man ; reduced to lower rank  
Than he, who was an angel still, though fallen.

Thus was the council finished ; and straightway  
The great assembly rose, and over all  
The kingly head of Satan towering, sailed  
Dark as a rising thundercloud. Erect,  
He passèd through the midst ; his compeers came  
In order in his train, and followed him  
Into the wild and dismal waste of night,  
As Israel went behind the columned fire.

It was the hour of midnight, and the Son  
Had sought the mountain to commune with God  
In preparation for the cross in view ;  
Perceiving which the fiends who rule the air  
Blew shrill the bugles of the winds, and from  
Their cloudy camps upon the mountains spread  
The slumbering lightnings woke, and leaped from hill  
To hill rattling their thunderous mail, that shook  
The desert round. And, 'mid the battling clouds,  
Revelled the fiends in many a horrid dance  
With the blue lightnings, to the piping winds  
And drumming thunder. But the Son of God  
Beneath the hell-illuminated heaven,  
Stood praying, calm as when the reverent stars  
Shone round Him like the golden candlesticks,  
And Nature was a temple hushed for prayer.



Swift on a flash of lightning Satan sped  
Through the tumultuous air, and instantly  
Beside the Saviour stood. But He no awe  
Felt at the apparition terrible.  
Nor fiery air, nor Prince of Air with fire  
Of Hell incensed, could terror rouse in Him,  
To whom with sweet endearment, and with joy  
Beyond conception great, God had just said,  
As in His earliest ministry, 'Thou art  
My Son beloved, in whom I am well pleased.'

'Whence comest thou?' said He; and in His face  
Shone a Divine serenity, that pierced  
The fiend with strange perplexity and fear,  
And half dissolved his scheme, though thickly woven;  
As the calm sun disbands the armed clouds,  
And conquers tempests with his smile serene.  
But as the kingly sun permits the clouds  
To again dispute his power, anew to show  
His golden sceptre, so the Son of God  
Restrained His glory, that the daunted fiend  
His courage might recover, and his thoughts  
Recall to mind. His confidence restored,  
He warily began: 'What piety  
Is Thine, how zealous, and how undefiled,  
O Son of God! who all this dreadful night  
Hast borne the fury of the storm, nor ceased  
Thy supplication, joined with fervent praise.  
I, as I watched Thee, felt my bosom glow

With admiration insuppressible;  
Nor could forego the occasion to present  
Myself before Thee, and in words unfeigned  
My high appreciation to express  
Of Thine unprecedented excellence;  
At all times manifest, but chiefly so  
When there is no eye witnessing but God's.  
For though I am no longer virtuous,  
I virtue can discern, and do admire  
Where found without hypocrisy—in none  
Perfect but Thee; but in Thee pure as heaven,  
As Thy devotions through this fearful night  
Upon these secret mountain-tops suffice  
To establish 'bove all doubt or argument.  
Thou art not one of those who love to stand  
In synagogues and corners of the streets,  
That they may be observed of men; but here,  
Where none surround Thee but the deaf, blind hills,  
None see Thee but the confidential stars,  
In secret Thou ador'st the Secret One.  
And when I contemplate Thy character,  
So free from ostentation and display,  
And love of praise, and thousand mockeries,  
Whereby men win religion's holy fame,  
And do insult their Maker, I exclaim,  
How wondrous 'tis that Thou shouldst spend Thyself  
In such unsparing efforts for their weal!  
Efforts so ceaseless, that Thou art compelled  
To embrace the silent seasons of the night

D

To worship God — spending the day for man.  
 He, all unthoughtful, lies upon his bed  
 Lost in the rapture of voluptuous dreams,  
 Whilst Thou art prostrate on the mountains bleak,  
 And with Thy worship mingling prayers for him.  
 Yes, truly, it is marvellous that Thou  
 Shouldst sacrifice for him Thy days — Thy nights —  
 Who is so false and so vainglorious,  
 Withal so little! Well might Israel's bard  
 Astonished ask, "Lord, what is man, that Thou  
 Art mindful of him, or the son of man,  
 That Thou shouldst visit him?" and when I view  
 The heavens around, whose vast circumference  
 I walk perpetually; the moon and stars,  
 On whose bright surfaces, as on the earth,  
 I wander up and down, I often cry,  
 How truly it is written, "What is man?"  
 Angels are far beneath Thy majesty;  
 Man, then, how far! O holy Son of God!  
 Tell me, I pray Thee, is he worth the price  
 Which the great Father for his ransom asks?

To whom thus Jesus: 'What the Father asks  
 That wills the Son. We are not two, but one;  
 His Child, not Victim, I. But well thou know'st  
 To wrest the Scriptures. In the wilderness  
 How skilfully thou wield'st the Spirit's sword!  
 But vain thy strife with Me, who am endowed  
 With all the fulness of His light and power.

Dost marvel at the Father's care for man ?  
These fields thy ignorant wonder shall rebuke,  
If affectation ignorance may be called !  
Behold these fields, on which the heavens have shed  
Their stormy benedictions ! morning's sun  
Shall show them dressed in more than royal pomp,  
Though blooming but a day. Not e'en a bird  
Falls to the ground without His special leave ;  
The ravens feed out of His hand ; He gives,  
They gather, each receives his meat from God ;  
Not one escapes His thought : and if He care  
For birds and lilies, shall He fail to care  
For His own child ?'

To whom thus quick the Fiend :

' I am His child ; but does He care for me ?  
Am I not banished ever from His face ?  
For me no Father's bowels yearn ; to me  
No Father's Son comes preaching peace from heaven ;  
But wrath pursues me with increasing zeal,  
Preparing for me deeper, darker hells,  
And torment without end. And now Thou com'st  
To publish a redemption to the lost ;  
But passest by the angels, and dost take  
On Thee the inferior seed of Abraham.  
Why such concern for man ? such wrath for us,  
Who were the Father's firstborn ? If He care  
First for His children, they who were the first  
Created should be first in His regard.'

To whom thus stern the Son : ' Presumptuous Fiend,  
Restrain thy wisdom false ; cease to compare  
Thyself with man. He is sin's helpless prey ;  
But thou the roaring Lion rending him—  
The Embodiment of wickedness—the Soul  
Of universal evil : Sin without  
A germ or wreck of Good—Badness unmixed—  
Essential Darkness—Darkness absolute !  
Father of lies, how durst thou then presume  
To call thyself God's child ? the godlike flame  
Is perished in thee ; that which now thou art  
Was self-originated—is thine own—  
Spontaneous, uncommunicated sin.  
Only in thy corruption dost thou live,  
In every other aspect dead ; for this is life,  
To know, and love, and serve the Living God.  
Existence, though eternal, out of Him  
Is but the immortality of death.  
But man is not Satanic ; guilt in him  
Is not like guilt in thee—deeply ingrained,  
But still a foreign element ; reigning,  
But with usurper's sceptre ; naturalised,  
But not a native ; gendered all by thee,  
Thou self-begotten mystery of crime !  
His soul is still God's field : not tares alone,  
But wheat is there, and good with evil strives.  
The wheat is God's, the tares His enemy's ;  
Sown, not spontaneous—sown by thee, thou foe  
Of man, and God, and goodness. Hence, on thee

The curse abides with ruin absolute ;  
On man with promise of deliverance.  
Nought doth remain in thee that can receive  
Redemption ; the great faculty of love  
Is extirpated in thy breast ; no trace  
Of the Godlike is left ; trust is extinct,  
And truth, the whole capacity divine,  
And sin and thou become identical.'

As when a lightning-flash the traveller strikes,  
And flings him to the earth, confused and stunned,  
So did this keen reply o'erwhelm the Fiend  
With horrible confusion ; for a space  
He stood as petrified. At length, recovering  
Composure, said, with insolent disdain :  
'Think not that I redemption seek, or would  
Accept if offered me ! but for the sake  
Of argument I had not spoken thus,  
And free I am to own my reasoning  
Confuted. Thy conclusion, just, confess,  
That I am not God's child : in my defeat  
I therefore glory ; to be proved His child  
Would disprove me His rival—all my boast !  
Father of evil better suits my mood  
Than child of God : the one means homage paid—  
Homage received, the other ; and a throne,  
Though it were built with His spent thunderbolts,  
I'd choose before a servant's place at His !'

So saying he straight upward flew ; his pride  
Sustained him, that he felt not his defeat.  
Humiliation breeds defiance, not  
Humility, in spirits lost through pride.

The Devil gone, returned the Son to prayer ;  
And there He stood, His eyes uplift to heaven,  
While rose the morning, and the mountain-tops  
Like altars burned ; and from the valleys fumed  
The purple mists like incense, and the birds  
Chanted in every grove, like choristers ;  
And like a molten laver burned the sea ;  
And golden clouds, like wings of cherubim,  
Shadowed the East ; and, like a priest, the sun  
Came forth, and stood before the face of God  
And in His glory shone : all Nature seemed  
With her great Lord in sympathy. And bright  
On Mount Moriah gleamed the pinnacles  
Of the true Temple. Sacred Edifice !  
But not more sacred to the Priestly Son  
Than where He stood (the priest doth consecrate  
The place, not place the priest) ; He sanctified  
The earth to God ; and every place for man  
To be a House of God, and Gate of Heaven.

Now suddenly the air around was filled  
With throng of infant spirits (in their midst  
Came Adam their first father), thither brought  
By guardian angels from the world unseen

To pay their homage to the Second Man—  
The Lord from Heaven, and thus they sweetly sang :  
' Son of the Highest ! Innocence Divine !  
Virtue impregnable ! in wisdom Man ;  
In pureness Child ; wise to select all good ;  
Refuse all evil ; no forbidden tree  
Thy lips e'er touched ; wisdom's fair tree alone  
Thou hast laid hold of, which is Tree of Life.  
Desiring naught to understand, except  
The Law of God and duty's narrow way !  
Unlike our great forefather, who desired  
The tree of knowledge to be like the gods ;  
Thou nothing sought'st to know, save how to show  
Thyself the Father's humble, holy Child.  
Conceived in sin were we, though never knew  
What sin might mean—our life a Paradise  
In ignorance of evil. Of the tree  
Of knowledge ne'er we took. Yet were not saved  
By Innocence, but by Thy virtue tried,  
O, second Adam ! second Head ! of whom  
The family in heaven and earth is named.  
Lo, at Thy feet the infant souls redeemed,  
In number numberless, now cast their crowns,  
With love and admiration infinite !'  
So saying, their pure coronals they took,  
And strewed them on the ground : the mountain-top  
Was white as snow. Their adoration o'er,  
They, by their guardian angels led, returned  
To their abode. Adam was left alone



With Jesus, and he thus his homage paid :  
‘ What language can I find, O Son of God,  
To express the deep emotions which this hour,  
So long expected, kindles in my breast !  
Four thousand years of weary waiting now  
Are ended, and my restless heart at last  
Is still ; its anguish of suspense o’erwhelmed  
In the full tide of consummated bliss.  
Well I remember how the load of grief  
Was lightened on me, when the righteous curse  
Was followed by the hope all-merciful—  
“ The woman’s Seed shall bruise the serpent’s head.”  
Eden seemed instantly to have regained  
Half its lost loveliness—all now regained  
By Thee ! Alas, that through my sin the world  
Has had no Eden, but all wilderness,  
Thorns, thistles, wormwood, gall and bitterness !  
Oh ! what a heritage I left my race—  
Laborious days and restless nights ; and bread  
Of carefulness, and tears ; and sweating brow,  
And aching heart ; infirmity and pain ;  
And age with all its miseries ; and worse,  
Famine and sword, and cold and nakedness,  
Murder and war ; and death the end of all.  
And when I turn my eyes from this dark scene  
And gaze on Eden’s love and loveliness,  
My spirit sinks to view the direful change,  
I think of all my hapless race have lost  
Through me ; and sooner had ne’er been than been

So false to them and Thee !'

To whom the Son  
Thus comfortingly spake : ' Restrain thy tears,  
And weep not for lost Eden. By thy fall  
He who from evil ever brings forth good,  
Had predetermined to make known His power  
In work surpassing great, which sons of light  
Desire to look into—its depth exceeds  
So far all other of His thoughts and ways !  
Nor, for thy children's sake, weep Eden's loss :  
Its innocence was ignorance of sin,  
Ignorance of foe its peace ; less glorious state  
Than that to which I raise them ; virtue ripe  
And unassailable ; standing not less  
In their intelligent choice than in my grace  
Preserving them ; no longer sons of God  
In an untempted godliness, but made  
All kingly sons, and crowned with victory.  
Hence are the angels crowned : they overcame  
The subtle Tempter, when third part he drew  
Into his evil influence, and sought  
To show himself as God ; till then, like thee  
In Eden, ignorant of wicked works,  
Child-angels innocent, unproved ; but when  
They kept their first estate they came like gold  
Out of the furnace ; now in virtue strong  
They stand, and are as kings and conquerors crowned.  
The day of Satan's banishment from heaven  
Became the Angels' coronation day.

Thick as the stars they stood ; each at My throne  
Came bending, and I gave to each his crown.  
No being in all heaven but has been tried,  
Save He who is by His necessity  
To sin superior, nor can tempted be ;  
Crowned from eternity the Only Good.  
The blissful life of Eden was to thee  
What is the state of childhood to thy sons,  
Unconsciousness alike of good or ill.  
(Thy trial was the trial of a child—  
Could it be other? thou a child in all  
Except thy stature, and thy sin a child's.  
Not like thy son's ; then sin, full-grown, rose up  
And stole the precious jewel of a life,  
Guarded more sacredly than the red fruit  
That hung upon the uninspired Tree.)  
Childhood and innocence alike were lost.  
Once plucked the tree of knowledge, there remains  
To that first pureness no return. Of this  
The cherubim and flaming sword that stood  
At Eden's gate were symbols, uttering loud,  
“ Lost innocence can never be regained.”  
But can be won a nobler heritage,  
And the red brand that drave thy exiled feet  
Into the outer waste, illumed the world  
With gleams prophetic of the victory  
Which in the wilderness thou might'st achieve,  
And dimly in the distance showed the gate  
Of the new Paradise which thou might'st gain.

Nor have thy sons lingered round Eden's bowers,  
But to the future pressed ; their breasts inspired  
With cheerful hope, not wrung with vain regret ;  
Content to earn their bread with sweating brow,  
And walk the thorns, and want, and weep, and die,  
Knowing that sorrow would to patience grow,  
Patience experience, experience hope, and hope  
Bear fruit at last in an exceeding load  
Of full-ripe glory ; and they find again  
The long-lost Paradise, its joy enhanced  
By all the travail of the wilderness.  
They died in faith, nor turned to look behind  
Upon the country whence the race set out.  
Nor patriarch, nor prophet, priest, nor bard,  
To Eden casting one regretful gaze ;  
Eden, a joy forgotten, as its site,  
Was blotted from the earth ; like Abraham, all  
Saluting fairer coast, though distant far,  
And death between. So strong and clear their hope  
Of joys to come, their only thought was heaven.'

To whom thus Adam : ' Hope of all the dead,  
As of the living ! ne'er have I looked back,  
But towards Thy advent. All the holy ones,  
With ceaseless expectation and desire  
Unutterable, have waited for Thy day ;  
Nor could be perfect till the promised grace  
Was perfected by Thee. Now shall the dead,  
Held in captivity for ages long,

44      *His Second Advent the Hope of Heaven.*

Rise to the full fruition of their bliss,  
Of which they reckon that the blessedness  
Of intermediate rest is but the type;  
Not worthy of comparison with that  
To be revealed by Thee.'

To whom the Son :

' Truly thou speakest, yet dost err in part;  
Thy bliss will not be perfected, though brought  
Nearer perfection's mark,—the glorious prize  
Of thy high calling, not to be revealed  
Till the last time. Carried by Me to heaven  
At My ascension; but there, waiting, kept  
Till the new dispensation shall complete  
The number of its days. Then shall I come  
In power and glory to the earth, without  
Sin-offering, and the work fulfil, begun  
In My first advent; and the dead shall hear  
My voice and rise, and all the living change  
To incorruptible; and both together be  
Translated to the final heaven, to dwell  
In God's great presence, soul and body joined  
In perfect fellowship and perfect bliss.  
Nor man alone, but all the works of God  
Shall be renewed—the heavens and earth entombed  
In flaming fire; and from the burning grave  
Emerge, refined and pure, new heavens and earth,  
Fit habitation for new creatures, raised  
Like man's vile body; changed, and yet the same—  
A body still, material, visible,

But incorrupt and undefiled, transformed  
Into the image of regenerate man :  
Nature his mirror always, evermore ;  
The risen universe reflecting him,  
As he is likeness of *his* risen Head,  
My resurrection, cause, and type of all.'

To whom thus Adam : ' When shall this be, Lord ?  
And what shall be the signs of its approach ?'

The Son replied : ' Ages must pass away  
Ere comes the end, and the long days between  
Shall dark and evil be. Iniquity  
Shall flourish, and because of it the love  
Of many shall wax cold. Scoffers shall come  
Proclaiming disbelief with trumpet tongue ;  
And weary with delay the virgin souls,  
That for the heavenly Bridegroom watch and wait,  
Shall sleep and slumber all. The world shall roll  
In its accustomed course, given up to gain,  
And violence, and lust ; nor better seem  
For My appearing ; and the blessed hope  
Of My return from heaven. There shall be wars,  
Distress of nations, and perplexity ;  
The sun to darkness turned, the moon to blood ;  
And heaven, like fig-tree, cast its golden fruit—  
Doom and destruction raging everywhere,  
And all Redemption's signs be lost to view.  
New fires of discord also shall I bring


46      *The Gospel the First Trump of Judgment.*

Into the world, though Prince of Peace I be ;  
And wars and revolutions shall arise  
Out of the blessed evangel I preach  
To all the earth, whose first announcement is  
“ The hour of judgment’s come ! ” for ere my words  
Can change the world into the residence  
Of truth and freedom, purity and peace,  
It must hew down all wrong and tyranny,  
False wisdom, and false worship. Priest and king,  
Philosopher and god, alike must fall  
By my world-judging gospel, which straight dooms  
All things, however old or beautiful,  
That stand upon a lie. The world must pass  
Through centuries of fire, ere it can be  
Orb of pure gold to gird its Maker’s brow.’

When thus our sire inquired anxiously :  
‘ O, blessed Lord ! reveal what shall become  
Of thine own Church through these tempestuous days ? ’

He thus replied : ‘ My Church shall not escape  
The judgments that shall come. Judgment begins  
At God’s house ever. With my fiery fan  
I thoroughly purge my floor ; God’s Israel  
Shall scattered be like chaff before the wind,  
Her house left desolate ; and the few grains  
Of wheat remaining I will gather safe  
In God’s great garner ; but the rest will burn  
With fire unquenchable. My followers

Shall My temptations enter, drink My cup,  
And share My baptism, and shall hated be  
Of all men for My sake; falsely accused,  
Brought before rulers, into dungeons thrown,  
And perish, some on scaffold, some on cross.  
My Church be hunted to and fro, in caves  
Of mountains hiding, and in sheepskins clad,  
Destitute and tormented. And when saved  
From tyrant's malice and the rage of mobs,  
And made the favourite of kings and courts,  
It shall degenerate into a tool  
For tyranny and priestcraft; crowned and robed,  
And flattered with the honours of a king;  
While they who bow the suppliant knee, surround  
Its head with thorns of insolent contempt,  
And on its purpled shoulders lay the cross.  
Of this unnatural alliance born  
A bastard church shall rise, which, in its turn,  
Shall bring forth things grotesque and horrible;  
Mother of all abominations called,  
Conceiving lies, which shall all-fatal be  
Because half-truths; my loveliest jewels set  
On falsehood's strumpet brow. A mystery,  
The masterpiece of Satan's counterfeits—  
Rome in its might; in idols Babylon;  
And Salem in its pharisaic pomp,  
All glorified with Truth's divine array.  
My heaven-veiled priesthood mocked in sensuous show;  
My Truth's infallibility usurped;





My Manhood's sweet perfection parcelled out  
Among My Saints, with ceaseless cries disclaimed ;  
And all the Motherhood in God concealed  
By intervention of a woman's name.  
This is the Antichrist, the Man of Sin,  
Last, greatest incarnation of the Fiend,  
Changing the truth of God into a lie,  
And bringing back a worse than heathen night.  
Wide shall it rule and long ; and when its power  
Shall shaken be, it shall oft seem to spring  
Into new life ; and side by side with Truth  
Shall bear the specious likeness ; and where'er  
True Christianity shall find a seat,  
There shall this hideous mockery uplift  
Its forehead insolent ; and men shall take  
Its impious mark upon their fearless brow.  
Nor shall it perish with the lapse of Time,  
As falsehoods whole ; the incorporated Truth  
Shall hold it on those never-resting waves  
Which all things human overwhelm. It shall not cease  
Till in the coming brightness of My Face  
It melts like snow before the breath of spring.  
Then shall the earth put on her beauteous robes  
And shine as in the morning of her birth.  
While circling round her sing the stars again ;  
And all the sons of God proclaim her joy.'

Here did He pause a moment, but our sire  
Space had not to reply, ere thus renewed

The Son His speech : ' Lo, I make all things new !  
But since things shown are mightier than things told,  
I will reveal them to thy quickened sight  
In vision high.' So saying, they were caught  
Up through the air ; and shining in their view  
The heavenly mountains rose. Majestic heights !  
To which the mighty Alps or Apennines,  
Or the huge Himalayas, were but mounds.  
Nor bleak, nor wild their aspect ; to their peaks  
Bosomed in flowers, or wreathed with purple vines,  
Home of eternal summer, seats of bliss !  
The summit gained, He bade our sire survey  
The scene around. He, looking down, beheld,  
Nursed in the bosom of the smiling hills,  
A beauteous garden sleeping in the sun.  
All kinds of fruit did roof the place with gold ;  
All kinds of flowers shook to the winds their sweets ;  
No desert rolled its waves of burning sand ;  
Nor thorns nor thistles marred the fruitful soil :  
No whirlwinds swept across the peaceful plains ;  
Nor thunder-cloud sat brooding on the hills :  
And there was no more sea. The cow and bear  
Did feed together ; and the lamb did sport  
With the fierce wolf as with its gentle dam :  
While the huge lion and the little kid  
Lay fondled in the sweet embrace of peace ;  
Serpent there was not ; and no fatal tree :  
But in the midst the tree of life, and throngs  
Of happy men and women freely plucked

Its living fruit, or slept beneath its shade.  
And far beyond, as on a slimy sea,  
The serpent vast lay rolling, and a band  
Of cherubim with waving swords of fire  
Forbade his entrance—watching day and night.  
He to that wild and wasteful deep confined,  
Lay weltering in the reeking, rotten flood,  
Like a gigantic Worm—for worm he seemed  
Rather than serpent—more the embodiment  
Of death and its corruption, than of craft  
And subtlety; as if his bruised head  
Had been the ruin of his intellect,  
And left him only a huge, wallowing mass  
Of filth and of obscenity, suffered to crawl  
Among creation's wreck and rottenness,  
And feast upon the slain of all the worlds,  
But never more to touch a *living* thing,  
Or find an entrance to the works of God.  
And Adam wept for joy when he beheld  
The world restored as in the happy days  
Before or serpent came or sin was known.

He looked again, and saw the garden fade;  
But from the view dissolving there emerged  
A sight more glorious. The flowery walks  
Were changed to golden streets; the wooded slopes  
To walls of polished jasper; and for flowers  
All kinds of precious stones blazed from the ground—  
The mountains seemed on fire with gold and gems.

And thus the Son commented on the scene :  
' This is the City, New Jerusalem,  
Whose Builder and whose Maker is the Lord.  
Nobler than Eden's is the City life ;  
Though God the garden planted, and man built  
The city ; because man was made for man.  
He only in society finds space  
For all his heart to bloom ; nor to love God  
Learns but by loving man. The fatal flaw  
In earth's great cities being in their bond —  
Cupidity, and love of fame and power.  
This city built by God ; its commerce all  
His work and worship ; dedicate to Him —  
All men associating in Himself —  
The centre, and circumference, and whole  
Of Universal Being—His temple they,  
And He their temple—walking He in them,  
They worshipping in Him ; and going out,  
Nor He, nor they, for ever.' Glad surprise  
Beamed in the face of Adam when he saw  
The expulsion to the world's wide wilderness  
Had been but progress to a higher bliss.

He looked again, the gorgeous scene dissolved  
Into a form half human, half divine.  
The garden's beauty and the city's pomp  
Blended in her in sweet sublimity.  
Clear as the sun her face ; her robe wrought gold ;  
The moon beneath her feet ; and terrible

The clouds, like banners, floating in her path :  
Comely as Tirzah or Jerusalem,  
The joy of earth and the admired of heaven !  
Nature and Art alike excelled in her,  
She stood, the last, completest work Divine—  
Reflecting Christ as He reflected God.  
At which our ancestor : ' This is the Sum  
Of all perfection. This is Paradise  
Incarnate, as was Eve. This is Thy Eve,  
Thy other self ; Jerusalem above,  
The Mother of us all ; bone of Thy bone,  
Flesh of Thy flesh ; I see Thy likeness shine  
In her as in a glass ; and to Thyself  
Thou shalt present her without spot or stain,  
The Flower of all Thy works—Creation's Crown.  
Now do I comprehend, though but in part,  
How all things were made *for* Thee—patterns, types  
Of glories in the heavens ; to be dissolved  
Amidst that Consummation, of all Time  
The solid hope among its fleeting shows,  
God and humanity espoused in one—  
One flesh, one spirit, one eternal whole,  
Indissoluble as the Three-One-Name.'

The vision vanished, but long space he stood  
Gazing at where it was. At length a Cross  
Rose 'mid a sea of gloom, when thus the Son  
Ended his meditation : ' Go thy way,  
For other scenes await My presence now ;

The vision is closed up until the end ;  
But thou shalt rest, and in thy lot shalt stand  
At the far end of these long, lingering days.'

Thus, having said, the Son was caught away.  
And Adam, by his guardian angel borne,  
Returned into the regions of the dead.

## ARGUMENT.

MARY, the Mother of Jesus, fears that her Son's life is in jeopardy—She comes to Bethany to see Him, He having returned from His temporary sojourn in a distant city, whither He had withdrawn for safety—Her attachment to the family at Bethany, particularly to Mary the sister of Lazarus, and the reason for it—Mary's character described—The absence of Jesus excites the alarm of His Mother—Her complaint—Lazarus, with great warmth, rebukes her fears—Mary replies, still disconsolate, and predicts that suffering and trial await Him—Jesus descending from the mountains—The Devil watches Him, reviews the history of his temptation, and resolves now to change his mode of warfare—He espies Judas lying beneath an olive-tree at Bethany—Descends to listen to his cogitations—Seeing his desperate mood, Satan enters into him—His resolution to betray his Master—He hurries to the Priests—The Lord returns to the house of Lazarus—His Mother's joy at beholding Him—He announces His betrayal and death—She gives utterance to her grief—He comforts her by reminding her of His Father's care, and by giving her the promise of another Comforter—Council of the Jews—Judas returns after his successful interview with the Priests.

### BOOK III.

NOW threatening clouds began to gather dark  
O'er Mary's home, and Simeon's warning words  
Knelt in her ears unceasingly. A dread  
Took hold of her, nor could she shake it off;  
Cold as a snake it clung about her heart—  
She feared her Son must die. Joseph long since  
Had passed away, leaving her desolate.  
Yet desolate she had not been, for He—  
Her child—had to her more than Joseph been,  
Or could have been. He, through that shadowed house,  
Had like an angel moved, shedding around  
A light too pure for aught but light from heaven.  
Up to the age of manhood He had lived  
For her; wrought at the bench all the day long  
To earn her bread, and home returned at night  
To cheer her widowed heart with converse sweet,  
God's business counting it His mother's days  
To brighten with His presence and His love.  
For after He had said, with soberness  
Beyond His years, 'About my Father's work  
I must be henceforth, in my Father's house  
Abiding alway.' He to Nazareth came  
Only a child to be; and thirty years



He found His heavenly Father's business there,  
Faithful to God in being kind to her.  
Nor since He had begun His public life  
Had He less cared for her ; oft lacked Himself,  
But never suffered her to want for bread,  
Or comfortable shelter from the storm,  
Faithful in that which was the least was He.  
Oh, happy widow to have such a Son !  
Well might she reverence Him as more than man,  
Who cared for her with all the care of God.

Her fears were not unfounded, for long time  
The priests and rulers had occasion sought  
To kill Him ; and of late, so bold had grown  
Their evil purpose, that He openly  
Could no more walk among them. He withdrew,  
And dwelt in Ephraim by the wilderness.  
Now He had come to Bethany, intent  
On going to the feast, and much she feared  
That from the feast He never would return.  
And feared she more because He did *not* fear,  
But rather seemed to seek His death,\* and said,  
In tones whose pathos none could e'er forget  
Who heard them, when the woman on His feet  
The ointment poured,—‘ Against my burying day  
Hath she kept this.’ Strange were those words, and dark

\* ‘ Master, the Jews of late sought to stone Thee, and goest  
Thou thither again ? ’—*John*, xi. 8.

As parables to some ; but well she knew  
They had deep meaning ; for 'twas not His wont  
To trifle with a solemn thing : vain words,  
Like false, were strangers to His reverent tongue.

And she had come to Bethany to see  
Her Son on His return. No guest obtained  
A heartier welcome 'neath that generous roof,  
And none received more honour from the host,  
Except the Lord Himself. Nor was there house  
In all the region round which she so loved,  
Or where she friendship so congenial found.  
Mary especially she loved, for she  
Was, like herself, calm, contemplative, mild ;  
She pondered things, and kept them in her heart.  
She neither strove nor cried, nor raised her voice  
In thoughtless mirth, or in more thoughtless wrath.  
She loved to sit with some like-minded friend,  
And talk of things of mutual interest,  
And then her heart would pour its secret forth  
With pleasure unrestrained ; but she was still  
Before a stranger, and that meek reserve  
Was lovelier than speech, and like a spell,  
Held men in pleasant awe. Her sister oft  
Misjudged her stillness — called it indolence.  
Such natures are to those of rougher mould  
Uncomprehended ; in a sense divine  
They live alone. But 'twas no indolence,  
But the deep hush of concentrated thought,

The rest of undivided energy ; her gaze  
So still, because so fixed ; her heart so calm,  
Because so taken up : not Martha-like,  
Cumbered with many things, and therefore tossed  
And turbulent ; but all engrossed with ONE,  
Therefore profound and still. Naught so intense  
As contemplation on the Highest Good—  
The rapt enjoyment of the Infinite,  
The soul's work is the hardest work of all !

Jesus had left them when the sun went down ;  
All night He had been absent ; the next day  
Was now near noon, and still He came not back.  
Oft had He trod the lonely hills by night,  
When none felt aught of wonder or of fear,  
Knowing that He was gone to walk with God.  
But times were now less safe, the Pharisees  
Were seeking to arrest Him, and who knew  
Whether they had not in some lonely place  
Seized on Him unawares, and borne Him off  
To prison or to death ? So Mary's fears  
Interpreted His absence, and her plaint  
She thus began : ' Oh ! whither is He gone,  
My Son beloved ? His coming what detains ?  
I fear the worst, since I possess no proof  
Of His security ; abundant proof  
Of the deep malice of His enemies.  
Perchance, they have waylaid Him, and the hill,  
Or grove, or garden, wheresoe'er He sought

A place for contemplation, has ere now  
Witnessed His murder ; murder that more foul  
Than any that Jerusalem e'er saw,  
Though dyed her streets with many a prophet's blood ;  
More pure and peaceable, and harmless He  
Than any that e'er came to her from heaven.  
Well I remember what good Simeon said :  
" A sword shall also through thine own heart pierce ;"  
Who knows but even now its threatening point  
May face my breast ? The sword that slays my Son  
Slays all my joy for ever. Reft of Him  
Life's bliss is gone, nor could I ask of Heaven  
A greater mercy than with Him to die.'  
The streaming tears forbade all further speech,  
When Lazarus with fervour thus began :

' And is it possible that He can be  
Subject to death who raised me from the dead ?  
Can those lips e'er be silenced which proclaimed,  
" I am the Resurrection and the Life ;  
Whoso believes in Me, though he were dead,  
Yet shall he live ?" and then, with louder voice,  
Commanded, " Lazarus, come forth !" a call  
That knocked so loudly at the iron gate  
Of Hades, that the hollow vault did shake  
As if the archangel's general trump had blown,  
And the great Judgment come. No door could stand  
Against such shock ; it straightway open flew.  
Death trembled as I passed, and shook his dart

In vain. Who shall make Him Death's prey who took  
The victim from the grave's eternal jaws,  
And gave him back to life? Where is the foe,  
Or scribe, or priest, or governor, or king,  
That can withstand the all-controlling power  
Which breathless held the unmanageable storm,  
And struck the vaunting ocean dumb? One look  
From Him, and the great, congregated world  
Would melt, like mountains at the touch of God!

But Mary answered, still disconsolate,  
Nor would be comforted; and thus she spake:  
'Well do I know His power, but who e'er saw  
That power put forth to save Himself from harm?  
When hungry, did He change the stones to bread?  
Thirsty, did He not beg in charity  
A cup of water from the stranger's well?  
And though He turned the water into wine,  
And multiplied the loaves, He naught would do  
When *His* wants pled; but like a wanderer cried,  
"Foxes have holes, and birds of air have nests;  
The Son of Man has not to lay His head."  
He will not save Himself. Dumb as a sheep  
He always was before His slanderers,  
And would be dumb before His murderers.  
Revengeful spirit never in Him dwelt,  
E'en when a child no fit of passion stained  
His lily cheek. Oft was He heard to say,  
When any young companions did Him wrong,

“ Father, forgive ; they know not what they do.”  
True, He has often spoken of His hour,  
As if He meant to glorify Himself  
Before the world at last ; but if His words  
I rightly do interpret (and my heart  
Has kept His sayings as its choicest store,  
And daily pondered them as words of God),  
That hour is full of mourning and of woe,  
The contrary of all His followers dream.’  
She ended, and her face looked as inspired.  
What wonder had she caught some few stray gleam  
From Him, in whom the Spirit’s fulness dwelt,  
Who thirty years stood lustrous at her side !

Meanwhile the Son, descending from the hills,  
Wended His way to Bethany. His steps  
The Devil watched, with eyes of mischief full,  
Discoursing on this wise within himself :  
‘ How vainly have I striven heretofore  
To rid me of my Adversary ! First,  
I stirrèd up the king to slay the babes  
Of Bethlehem, not doubting that this Child  
Would perish in the slaughter ; but, behold !  
An angel of the Lord Joseph forewarned,  
Who took the mother and the child by night  
Into the land of Egypt, and there dwelt  
Until the death of Herod : double cause  
Of disappointment, when I learned the event  
Had but fulfilled the Scripture, where ’twas writ,

"From Egypt have I called my Son." Then oft  
I tempted Him in childhood, with such toys  
As childhood loves; but found no childish vice  
Would in His heart take root. Perished each thought  
As I injected it, before it reached  
His soul, like fiery darts that hissing die  
Upon the ocean's bosom. And in youth  
No tempting bait of influence, or ease,  
Or wealth, or glory, could attract His thoughts,  
Bent only on the Father's business, and  
The honour that from Him alone proceeds.  
Every forbidden tree I led Him to,  
But none He took of; and the Tree of Life—  
The Tree of Knowledge of the Only Good—  
He lived upon, His constant nourishment,  
Esteeming it above His needful food,  
His meat and drink to learn the Father's will,  
And do it. Come to manhood, I essayed  
A bolder contest. In the desert wilds  
Raised up a world-wide vision, kingdoms, courts,  
Sceptres, and thrones, offering to crown Him there  
Upon His bended knee. But stooped He not  
From His lone, rugged height of poverty,  
On which, as on the mountain desolate,  
He stood above His woe and trod the prize,  
As 'twere a serpent, whose ensnaring coil  
Lay twined about the world. Ceaseless since then  
My efforts—ceaseless as His words and deeds—  
By force, by guile, by means of every kind.

Once urged the Jews to stone Him, but He hid  
Himself, and so passed through their midst. Again,  
While sleeping on a vessel, I unloosed  
A tempest from the prison of the hills,  
Which in its wild emancipation tossed  
The little ship as in a sport of death.  
But He arose and spake. The shrieking winds,  
With angels' hymns, soothed Him again to rest;  
While the wild waters, in their pure repose,  
As in a mirror, showed their sleeping God.  
Nor have I shunned the strife of argument  
Sustained by passages of Holy Writ  
From God's words stol'n and woven into mine.  
Of my devices most effective found  
With other men, who, harnessing a text  
To evil purposes, or finding in 't  
Unnatural meanings, have my service done  
With pious zeal, and boasted loud the while  
That they were serving God. But in His hand  
The Spirit's sword so quick and powerful is,  
Naught can withstand its edge; and, severing straight  
The false from true, it hath my craftiest schemes  
Laid open to the day, compelling me  
For the first time to own before a man,  
The Prince of this world cometh finding naught.  
Upon His sufferings His heart is fixed;  
Witness the resolution He displayed  
In my last contest. Oh, how different He  
From the first man, whom one device o'ercame!



Device so simple, that the world has laughed  
With incredulity, and called it childish tale !  
But the profoundest stratagems of Hell,  
Like bonds on Samson, have but shown the strength  
Of Him who is the Second Adam called.  
Clearly I see that serpent's wiles with Him  
Will end in naught—wise as the serpent He,  
Though innocent as dove. With His own arms  
I must assail Him. Suffering, His choice,  
Must be my chosen weapon. I His heel  
Shall bruise ; this did I hear declared of old :  
And wherefore should I not so swell the woe  
Appointed to Him as to bruise His head ?  
His means be mine, and I will straight invoke  
The deepest Hell new horrors to unfold ;  
And worse than Egypt's plagues shall issue forth,  
Mingled with darkness piercing to His soul,  
All noxious, vile, abominable things—  
Shapes uglier and more horrible than Hell  
E'er bred within her miscreating womb—  
Monsters so hideous, that herself shall fear  
To embrace her offspring, and in wildered haste  
Despatch them to the world to rid her sight  
Of that which Hell out-hells. Then if in fear  
He cry not, " Father, save me from this hour,"  
I shall confess my second conflict lost,  
And doubly damned myself, for ever damned !'

Thus said the Fiend. Then, as a vulture scents

A carcase near, so did he snuff the scent  
Of mind corrupt, and straight he darted down  
To where, beneath an olive's gloomy shade,  
Lay Judas, who had thither secretly  
Conveyed himself, that he might meditate  
Upon his prospects in the government  
Of the new kingdom, for which three long years  
He had been following the Nazarene  
Through good report and bad. And now his heart  
Was weary with delay, and sick with hope  
Deferred ; for that fair kingdom seemed to him  
To grow more distant as the days grew old.  
And as he lay, dark and foreboding thoughts  
Flitted, like birds of night, across his brain ;  
And out of the calm air he seemed to hear  
Low whisperings, as if a spirit spoke.  
And more than once he turned aside to see  
The voice that spake with him ; but nothing saw.  
Long had he been the prey of evil thoughts ;  
Now he would burst into a storm of rage ;  
Anon would sink into dejected mood,  
And shun his brethren, and refuse to eat ;  
Like Ahab, when his avarice was foiled  
By Naboth's righteous courage, or like Saul  
When the foul spirit came on him. At length  
Delay to frenzy his impatience wrought,  
And some adventurous and desperate scheme  
He was resolved to try, to put to proof  
Whether his Lord Messiah was, or not ;

For rather would he know the worst, than bear  
This anguish longer. Seeing his dire mood  
The Devil entered. As when falls a spark  
Into a magazine, so the dark Fiend  
Came into fatal contact with the heart  
Of the apostate, and the infernal blaze  
Followed with instantaneous effect.  
Upstarting from the ground with gestures wild,  
And threatening countenance, he thus exclaimed :  
' I'll be deceived no longer ! I will know  
Who this man is ! The kingdom shall now come  
Or never ! If He be the looked-for Christ,  
What serves this long delay ? If He be not,  
'Tis better men should know : better at least  
For me—my heart is withered up like grass  
With these vain longings—it shall long no more  
But rest in their fulfilment—or in this,  
The knowledge they can never be fulfilled.  
Hence will I hasten to the assembled priests  
And offer to betray Him. Should He then  
Confound His enemies, and take the throne,  
All men will be my debtors : should He not,  
They'll be my debtors still, for having rid  
The land of a deceiver.' As he ceased,  
Bad resolution bound his narrowed lips,  
And all the devil darkened in his face.  
He said no more ; but straightway to the priests  
He bent his firm-set steps, and as he went  
The Devil fanned the fire.

Ere long the Lord  
Arrived at Bethany. His safe return  
Lifted the weight from Mary's heart; alas!  
Only to lay another burden there—  
A burden heavier still. As she sprang forth  
And fell down at His feet, and lost her load  
In the full gush of her replenished joy,  
He said—her heart the while sank like a stone—  
'Woman, mine hour is come! the Son of Man  
Must be betrayed and crucified. E'en now  
Mine enemies in council sit; and one  
Whom I have called disciple is gone forth  
To plot for My betrayal. Thus fulfilled  
The Scriptures must be, "My familiar friend  
With whom I took sweet counsel, and who shared  
My daily bread has lifted up his heel."  
All My disciples shall be scatterèd,  
Each to his own; and I be left alone—  
If one alone can be whom God is near.  
This face already marred with nameless grief,  
And channelled by unceasing floods of tears,  
Shall be defiled with the betrayer's kiss—  
The only kiss with which man ever dare  
Invade heaven's awe-inspiring loveliness—  
The first, save thine—the last from human lips—  
That kiss a traitor's, and that traitor friend.  
My friend so rude, what will My foes not be!  
Hiding their guilt beneath a follower's name.  
They will not scruple to pluck off the hair:

What wonder when a friend has on My face  
Thus writ their license out ? Nor will they stay  
At this, but, bolder grown, will strip Me bare  
And plough My back with many a furrow deep,  
And crown My head with thorns ; and, since a king  
Must have a throne, they will exalt Me high  
Upon the cursed tree, and with a reed  
For sceptre, and for purple robe My blood,  
My royal honours will be made complete.  
This is My lifting up. Earth has no sinless throne  
To give her King : I sanctify a Cross —  
My sinless seat of empire evermore.'

Some space the blessed mother silent stood,  
In grief too deep for words. Recovering  
At length, she answered sad : ' O Son beloved !  
What words are these ? they enter to my soul.  
Favoured most highly to have called Thee mine,  
But lifted to this eminence of bliss,  
Now to be super-eminent in grief,  
I stand alone in privilege and pain.  
Yet will I not say, Better ne'er have known  
Such holy joy than pay a price so dear.  
Nay, though it cost me all a human heart  
Can suffer, of privation or of grief,  
'Twill be too light to bear for such a boon.  
What hours of sacred pleasure have I spent  
In listening to Thy words !—words ever full  
Of wisdom from above. E'en while a child

Thou spakest of Jehovah as a Son  
Out of his Father's bosom ; and how near  
Did the Almighty seem to me when Thou,  
In unappalled simplicity, didst say  
" My Father," and I trembling, pondering,  
Felt that the word belonged to Thee alone,  
Although Thou wast conceived in my womb.  
Yet wast Thou not the less a child—my child.  
A flower brought down from holier, brighter worlds,  
To blossom in the garden of my heart,  
And fill my home with fragrance of the skies ;  
But modest as the lily of the vale,  
And meek as if Thou hadst no love but mine.  
And who shall be to me what Thou hast been ?  
Who offer for me prayers so full of grace ?  
Who teach my erring soul so much of God ?  
Who guide my wandering steps so straight to heaven ?  
Who look upon my faults so tenderly ?  
And when my tottering age shall sink in death,  
Who shall be there to lead me to the grave ?  
Who soothe my soul so sweetly to its rest ?  
O Son ! my all is gone when Thou art gone :  
Bereft of Thee 'tis blessedness to die.'

To whom thus Jesus answered tenderly :  
' Thy Maker is thy husband : He will keep  
Thy soul from want. The widow's Judge He sits,  
For ever, in His holy dwelling-place.  
And lo ! I send another Comforter,

To be for ever with you, everywhere.  
But little while ye see Me, but your heart  
Shall see Me alway : for I go as man  
To come again as God—pass from your sight  
To enter in your soul ; no more to be  
A guest that tarries for a night, but found  
For ever in your heart My temple-home.'  
He ended, and a death-like stillness fell  
On every one ; each to the other drew :  
They felt the sun had set on Bethany.

Meanwhile, a Council of the Sanhedrim  
Had met, consulting how they might secure  
Their purpose. The assembly Caiaphas  
Counselled on this wise, rising : ' Once again,  
Brethren and fathers, are we met to advise  
Upon the safest method, place and time,  
To arrest this Troubler of our Commonwealth,  
Whose favour with the people doth our task  
Beset with perils great ; which to avert,  
Ridding ourselves of Him, needs all the skill  
With which our wisdom and experience  
Can furnish us : for the whole world, indeed,  
Hath gone out after Him, and everywhere  
Our holy office and authority  
In danger are of being set at nought.  
Perhaps in some wild hour His followers  
May rise against us, and our lives become  
A sacrifice to their unhallowed zeal.

Not many hours have passed since through these streets  
He rode in feignèd royalty ; while they  
Who crowded round Him (multitudes there were)  
Shouted " Hosannah," and their garments strewed  
Before Him in the way. And straight He came  
Into these sacred courts, over-elate  
With His rude march of triumph, and did cast  
The money-changers forth, and overturn  
Their tables, and the seats of them who sold  
The sacrificial doves. The sellers fled,  
Seized by a sudden fear—fear, let us hope,  
Of the mad crowd ; nor so dishonour them  
As to attribute their dismay to Him.  
At least, let *us* come forth and show ourselves  
Worthy our high and honourable name,  
By swift avengement of this sacrilege,  
Which to pass by would argue us as weak  
To uphold our sanctity, as He is bold  
To challenge it, and ruthless to profane  
The holy place that guards it. Whereunto  
These impious invasions of our rights  
Will grow I do with certainty predict—  
The downfall of our priesthood and our power  
Either before the rising populace,  
Or the infuriated jealousy  
Of our oppressors, whose hard yoke is now  
Too heavy to be borne ; but who, provoked  
By these attempts at royalty, will rise  
In an exterminating fury, and destroy



Our city from the earth. Remember, then,  
My words, spoken when last our council met ;  
“ It is expedient that one should die,  
That the whole nation perish not.”

He ceased.

Then up rose Benjamin : a Pharisee  
Of straitest sect was he, and thus he spake :  
‘ It is not our authority alone  
This Galilean into question brings,  
But even Moses’ seat in which we sit.  
For the great law which, on the awful top  
Of Sinai, from midst the cloud and fire,  
Jehovah gave by His own finger writ,  
He seeks to bring into contempt of men,  
Who are not able to discern between  
Their right hand and their left, except as taught  
By us who have the key of knowledge—He  
Taking them captive in their ignorance  
By new interpretations—new, and hence  
Contrary to the wisdom of our learned  
And venerable teachers, who have spent  
Their lives in meditation on the Law  
And its traditions. And what man is this  
Who dares their grave authority impeach?  
A man of letters? Nay, but all unknown  
Till three short years ago, when He was brought  
Out of obscurity by the strange man  
Who in the deserts of Judea dwelt—  
Given to wild fancies, such as prey on men

That live in solitudes of mountain gloom,  
Reft of man's friendship and of woman's love,  
And every sweetening, softening joy of life—  
There thundering like the tempest, which had blown  
Its trump around his pillow, rude alarms  
About a 'kingdom near'—'a wrath to come—'  
Whole multitudes of terror-stricken men  
Hastening to Jordan to his baptism.  
The publicans went out : no marvel they  
Should seek the common and unsacred waste—  
The home of birds and beasts, like them unclean ;  
But, tell it not in Gath, our Pharisees  
Went also, be 't remembered, to their shame.  
Among them came this Man, and was baptized,  
And by that ignorant enthusiast proclaimed  
The Christ of God—the Prophet that should come.  
Until that hour a village carpenter ;  
Joseph His father—now sometime deceased ;  
Mary His mother—with us to this day.  
And when, forsooth, in our religious zeal  
We charge His doctrine with being contrary  
To all the Scripture and the holy law  
Of Moses, He straight answers that the one  
Doth testify of Him, and that of Him  
The other wrote. Impardonable crime  
Against the reputation of the dead,  
Who might, methinks, be almost moved to break  
Their rest in Abraham's bosom, to avenge  
This grave offence against their memory,

And the thrice-hallowed Scriptures which they wrote  
And gave to us to interpret and defend.  
Did Moses write of such a Man as this ?  
A man who breaks the Sabbath-day ; a man  
Who eats and drinks with publicans ; a man  
Who suffers harlots to pollute His feet  
With their vain tears and ointments—worse than vain ?  
While at ourselves, who would not even touch  
Such reprobates with the remotest fringe  
Of our long garments, and would flee *their* touch  
As that of lepers, He doth daily launch  
His ignorant thunders—calls us hypocrites,  
Vipers, and whited sepulchres, whose end  
Is the damnation of the deepest hell.  
'Twas not of such as He that Moses wrote,  
Who was the meekest man in all the earth,  
And rather had been blotted from the Book  
Than curse the meanest of his brethren. Or  
Was it of such an One the Prophets spake ?  
Was it a peasant's son—a carpenter—  
A man who hath not where to lay His head ;  
Whose followers are poor fishermen ; whose friends  
The poor and friendless ; was it such as He  
Of whom Isaiah spake, or Jeremy,  
Or Daniel, who Messiah's glory saw—  
The Son of David seated on His throne,  
Bearing the honours of His Father's house,  
Reigning among His ancients gloriously,  
And making His beloved Jerusalem

An excellency everlasting, and  
A joy of every generation ? Go,  
Search ye the Scriptures : there Messiah moves  
In majesty incomparable, which Solomon,  
In all his glory, did but shadow forth.  
And are not the pretensions of this man,  
Born in a shed and taught to handle tools,  
The most presumptuous that were e'er proclaimed  
By a designing heretic before  
An undiscerning and deluded crowd ?'

He ended, and rose Simon flushed with wrath,  
And, adding fuel to the fire which now  
Raged furiously, he spake in choking words :  
' Brethren, the half hath not been told as yet  
Of this man's vanity. Have ye forgot  
The words He uttered when He stood within  
Our beautiful and holy Sanctuary,  
" Destroy this Temple, and in three days I  
Will raise it up ?" Or those more arrogant,  
" Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see  
My day, for before Abraham was I am."  
Such words could only be the language of  
A man that has a devil and is mad.  
But His impiety hath even yet  
A more appalling measure ! Which of us  
Can e'er forget His blasphemies, who said,  
" I am the Son of God." " My Father works  
On Sabbath-days, and I do therefore work."

“ My works are His.” “ He is in Me, and I  
In Him—I and the Father One.” ’

These words

Fell on their hearts like fire on a dry tree.  
Such frenzy seized the Council that his voice  
Was in the uproar drowned ; and had their Foe  
Been in their midst, like wolves with hunger mad,  
They had devoured Him. Sacred Lamb of God !  
Not so ordained to offer up Himself ;  
But by the verdict unprecipitate  
Of law, and public lifting to the Cross  
With the solemnity of sacrifice.  
The wild confusion of a massacre  
Impossible in that transcendent death,  
Whose hour, with every circumstance, was fixed  
By His infallible decree, who holds  
The wrath of men and devils in His hand,  
And is the God of order and of peace.

Two only joined not in the boisterous scene,  
Joseph and Nicodemus. These had sat  
Speechless and pale throughout ; and now they left  
The Council, not consenting to the deed.  
Amidst the general tumult, unobserved,  
Judas had entered ; and in conference stood  
With Caiaphas, who from the Council went,  
Taking the stranger with him. In brief space  
They both returned. Then Caiaphas stood up  
And said, ‘ God hath provided means to give

His enemy into His servants' hands ;  
For while we have been sitting, He hath moved  
The heart of *this* man to throw off the yoke  
Of the false Teacher, and his willingness  
Declare to aid us in His safe arrest.  
At a convenient opportunity  
He will betray Him ; and he only waits  
To have your sanction, and to know the sum  
To be agreed in recompense.'

All eyes

Flamed instantly with a demoniac joy.  
'We give thee welcome!' shouted every voice.  
'Pieces of silver thirty be the price,'  
Said Caiaphas ; and all agreed at once.  
Then straightway was the money paid to him.  
Miser ne'er seized his gold more greedily  
Than he grasped it ; fowler ne'er trapped his bird  
More eagerly than they clutched him. Their plans  
Had been delayed thus long for lack of one  
Whose private knowledge of the Nazarene  
Would guarantee success. The right man this—  
He knew their Foe, His habits and His haunts.  
One of His followers, too, his guilt would serve  
As cloak for theirs, and the proposal was  
His own. They covenanted, swore. The net  
Was drawn ; Judas was bought, and Christ was sold.  
Gloating upon his gain he went away,  
Gloating on their success they saw him go ;  
Each looking on the other as the tool.

While in their midst, exulting, Satan stood,  
And drew his net round all : each, other's dupe,  
But all the victims and the tools of Hell.

## BOOK IV.



## ARGUMENT.

MORNING at Bethany—A day of grief—Christ departs at eventide  
—Brief reference to the Feast of Passover and the Last Supper  
—Satan enters into Judas again—Judas retires—Goes to the Priests—A beautiful night, the moon at the full—Jesus goes to Gethsemane—Retires to a distance from the disciples—Has a vision of sin—His prayer for deliverance—Satan's triumph—Jesus returns to His disciples, and finds them sleeping—Satan calls up the vision of death—Jesus comes back to the place where He saw the vision of sin—Death meets Him in the way—His fear—Gabriel appears to Him, and ministers comfort—The angel withdraws—The rage of the evil spirits whom he passes on the way—Jesus returns to His disciples, whom He finds sleeping again—Satan, seeing the Saviour's triumph over Death, flies up into the air, and commands his legions to come down to his aid, after transforming themselves into shapes of the utmost frightfulness and obscenity—Their transformation—He invokes Hell to disclose her darkest horrors—The fiends are themselves overcome at the sight of the exceeding foulness of this last and incomparable production of sin—They assail the Saviour—Michael, who has been guarding, summons the seraphim to his aid—The sign from heaven—The seraphim fall back—The devils increase their rage—Christ's easy triumph over this last and specially reserved device of the Wicked One—The evil spirits are doomed to the obscene forms they have chosen—Those forms are reduced in size—Their speech is confused—Hell is divided against itself—They see their place filling with the seraphim, who are appointed to the future management of the world—They are seized with a common desire to attack—War in heaven—Michael's victory—Christ's arrest.

## BOOK IV.

THE night had flown ; but had not borne the load  
From Bethany's stricken home ; sweet Sleep had  
wrapped

The village in oblivion's grateful shade,  
But here forgot to make her nightly call.  
Nor had been wooed ; no heart had they to sleep,  
Who had just heard their Master was to die.  
The morn had risen ; but not to lift the night  
That lay upon their souls, or throw one ray  
Through their dark rain of tears. The day wore on,  
But their grief wore not ; and the world without,—  
The smiling skies, the glancing streams, the trees  
Clapping their hands, the valley's jocund song,  
And happy children playing in the street,  
As innocent as Nature, and as fresh  
In their young joy,—these did but drive their hearts  
Into their own deep shades, and make them feel  
That all things piped in vain to mourning man.  
And when at eve Christ took His leave of them,  
They followed Him in silence and in tears  
Through the still house, looked what they could not speak ;  
And, as His latest footstep blessed their door,  
They said, ' The glory is departed.' All

His earthly friendship with them now was past,  
And there it stood behind, sad, beautiful,  
Like ruins in the moonlight's silver set,  
Solemn and tender, but a ruin still,  
And all its loveliness reflected light —  
After the flesh they knew Him now no more.

Two of His followers Jesus had sent forth  
Before Him, to prepare the passover :  
Thus saying, ' When ye reach Jerusalem,  
Go into such a street, there shall ye see  
A man, with water in a pitcher ; him  
Follow to the house ; and to the goodman say,  
The Master saith, " Where is the room, where I  
Shall eat the feast of passover ? " He straight  
Shall lead you to an upper, furnished room ;  
There make ye ready.' So they went, and found  
As He had said, and there prepared the feast.

At eventide He came from Bethany,  
And His disciples with Him ; and the feast  
He ate with them. Also the supper, when  
He brake the bread, and poured the wine, and said :  
' This is My body, broke for you ; and this  
My blood, shed for your sins, eat, drink ye all,  
Now ; and hereafter, whensoever ye meet,  
In memory of Me, until I come.'  
The supper being ended, Satan came  
And entered into Judas : and his heart

Was proof against all warning, and the light  
Of His detecting eye who turned to him  
And said, 'Do quickly that thou dost.' He felt,  
Nor pang of sorrow, nor a chill of fear,  
But left the table, and with hurried steps  
Went out. And it was night—his image black !  
On to the palace of the priest he walked,  
With footstep resolute and head erect,  
Proud of the sudden eminence to which  
His badness had exalted him. He strode  
Through the lone city, as a lion stalks  
Through the dark woods, his empire and his home.

The night was fair. The dying winds had crept  
Into their rocky caves : the weary birds  
Had dropped into their nests ; the drooping flowers  
Had closed their dewy eyes ; and Salem lay  
'Mong the still mountains cradled, like a child  
Asleep. While from Heaven's altar-steps the moon  
Poured from her silver goblet full and round  
The saintly light which turns to spiritual  
The solid world—tender-bright phantom-sea,  
In which creation seems to lie in trance—  
The peace of Nature's sacramental hour.  
The traitor's hurrying steps alone disturbed  
The rest he recked not of.

The palace reached,  
He found the priests assembled, and a band  
Of soldiers waiting his command. High swelled

His heart to see the great authority  
Won by the bold adventure, which none else  
Had dared essay. Now would his Master be  
Roused from His meditative mood, and forced  
To instant action. Men contemplative  
Not seldom lack decision, promptitude,  
The resolution and the energy  
Of men of action, heroes, generals,  
And rulers of the world. In these he deemed  
His Master wanting ; now He would be urged  
By danger to shake off this studiousness,  
And take His power, or else like felon die ;  
His death the sure, irrefragable proof  
His coming kingdom was a madman's dream,  
Or a deceiver's lie. Addressing them,  
He said, ' Whom I shall kiss, that same is He ;  
Take Him, and hold Him fast ; not far from here  
He tarries ; ye shall find Him speedily  
If ye come after me.'

Still the moon shone,  
Still the winds slumbered ; and, across the brook  
That almost fell asleep as it crept down  
Its sheltered bed and murmured dreamily,  
The Master came, with slow and careful steps  
That startled not a bird ; though in His heart  
Emotions strove, more vast and terrible  
Than Nature's doom-predicting agonies ;  
And had the earth been struck with thunderbolts,  
Or rocked by earthquake, rending to their base

Her mountain pillars; had the night been wild,  
Beyond the million-aged memory  
Of Nature's self, the hoary Chronicler  
Had owned her darkest record had no more  
Imaged the conflict in His greater heart,  
Than lightnings of a summer evening's cloud  
Can paint the conflagration of the worlds.  
'My soul is sorrowful e'en unto death,'  
He said. Nor could the soul-becalming sight  
Of Nature, sleeping on the breast of God,  
Him tranquillise; her wonted power to soothe  
Was lost; the world He brought upon His heart  
Eclipsed the moon, and all was total night.

Retiring to a distance, He bowed down  
His head in prayer. On lifting it, He saw  
A vision rise before His face; it stood  
In stature like a mountain, and its shape  
Like Chaos seemed, adulterate and dark,  
A mixture of things base and horrible;  
Like nothing which God ever made, a huge  
Confoundedness of all created forms.  
Man in dim semblance, but so marred and mixed  
That not a hateful creature on the earth,  
Or under it, subtle, or fierce, or mean,  
Or grovelling, or lustful, but might see  
Its likeness in it. Dark as hell it stood,  
Expanding like a cloud; and, 'mid its form,  
Transparent to the Son, a furnace burned.

Slowly, like mountain billow, it advanced,  
 Opening, like mountain earthquake-riven. 'It must  
 Be rolled on Thee as burden; must be wrapped  
 Around Thee like a robe; Thou must appear  
 As Evil's incarnation, be made Sin,  
 Incarnate Virtue Thou!' so said a voice,  
 In accents stern, from heaven. He shrank amazed,  
 As the approaching Terror gaped, to engulf  
 His sinless soul; and when his heart of fire  
 Closed around Him, through the calm night air  
 Quivered to heaven His agonising cry:  
 'Father, if possible, let this hour pass.'

The Devil heard; and through his heart hope flashed  
 An instantaneous ray. 'And is it so?'  
 He cried; 'and does He shrink? then it is e'en  
 As I conjectured, that the experienced woe  
 Would bow His awful strength. In vain, O Earth,  
 Thy hope, thy expectation long! in vain  
 His promise oft repeated, and thy prayer  
 For His redemption rising evermore!  
 He halts, He falters, and the gates of hell  
 Prevail against Him! Triumph, all ye powers  
 Of darkness! See, He sinks beneath His load,  
 And on His sunken head shall hell erect  
 Her throne surpassing high! But wait my song  
 Of exultation, till the end declare  
 My victory perfect. Bring we now our strength  
 Against the weakened point. The sufferer shrinks

*Satan raises up the Vision of Death.*

From Evil's contact ; now, come forth, O Death !  
Dreaded by mortals all — Sin else not feared,—  
Shape of unmitigated hideousness,—  
Sin of her beauteous bloom despoiled, and stripped  
Of her gay decorations, and exposed  
In all her hollow heartlessness ;—her bones  
Left only, and these marrowless and dry,  
Fast locking in its withered, frozen arms  
Souls that have wantoned on Sin's breast, and fall'n  
Asleep in her enravishing embrace !  
Thou Skeleton of Sin, I bid thee rise,  
And show thyself the ghastly Shade thou art !'  
He said, and straightway at His word, who had  
The power of death, the frightful Spectre rose.

Driven by the overwhelming sight of Sin,  
The Son, meanwhile, had hastened back to look  
Upon the face of man and be refreshed ;  
Dearer than angel's to His heart was man's,  
In that sore hour of human agony.  
But found He only other cause for pain :  
Man's sin was fierce, and man himself was cold ;  
And with His great heart breaking He returned,  
To let it break, since so it must, alone.

And as He went there glided from the shade  
The Spectre pale. It came and stood before  
His face, and from its empty sockets fixed  
A gaze more terrible than living eyes



E'er could :—all foes but images of him  
 The world's last enemy :—no heart looked out  
 Of those unwindowed holes, grave-dark and cold,  
 And round its brow a monstrous Worm did writhe,  
 As if in mortal combat with its lord,  
 Resolved on its own head to set the crown :  
 More hideous that strife than Death supreme !  
 He threatening stood, and with his bony hand  
 Laid bare the sepulchre. The obnoxious sight  
 Appalled the sinless man : to Holy One  
 Infliction undeserved ; and ne'er was life  
 So dear to any, for none knew so well  
 The glory hid in being (he alone  
 Who knows what 'tis to *live* perceives what 'tis  
 To die) ; amazèd sore, He fell to earth,  
 And cried, ' O Thou, who to deliver me  
 From Death art able ! all things possible,  
 O Father, are to Thee ! let this cup pass.'  
 And being in an agony He prayed  
 More earnestly ; His soul grew so intense,  
 That all His body, reddening with the fire,  
 Shed tears of burning blood.

Seeing His fear,

Gabriel sped to Him, swift to minister  
 Such comfort as the angel might presume  
 To offer to his Maker while a man.  
 It was the human spirit shrank ; to it  
 The angelic being spake, and these his words :  
 ' Fear not the Shade ; Death has no Worm for Thee,

Nor for Thy body, nor Thy soul. God saith,  
His Holy One corruption shall not see,  
In whom corruption is not. Death's decay  
Feeds not on that wherein no sin hath been,  
For all corruption issues from the spirit ;  
It pure, Thou mayst defy the kingly Worm  
That triumphs over Death and ever lives.  
Thy flesh *no worm* devours ; Thy soul THE WORM  
Can never touch, which is the second Death,—  
Corruption's life, Sin's immortality,  
The spirit living on its great decay.  
For sin Thou sufferest, but not Thine own ;  
And, touched with the great merit of Thy pain,  
The loathsome worm will languish and expire  
In many a heart where it hath fixed its fangs,  
And men with dying breath shall bless the Man  
Who took the monster's sting—his life—away.  
Let none admire that words so trite could stay  
So great a nature in its agony ;  
For oft in deep distress old truths appeal  
With freshness new when told by other lips ;  
So to His human soul the Angel's words  
New courage gave, and from the spectre Death  
Full half the terrors fled ; 'twas but a Shade,  
Its crown looked wan, the Worm obscene was gone.

Gabriel withdrew ; the Master's new-gained strength  
His sweet reward ; and in a clump of trees  
A group of devils stood, and gnashed their teeth

With malice as he passed, yet dare not strike,  
For Gabriel was clothed against this hour  
In strength above his own ; else had the night  
Been startled with encounter terrible,  
Assayed by evil spirits, whom their Prince  
Had ordered to the attack : as for himself,  
No strength had he to spare in combat now  
With angel nature, e'en though unequipped  
With might superior ; his utmost power  
A greater strife demanded, and anew  
That conflict must be waged, and his lost ground  
Recovered by more desperate assault.

Returned the Master to His favoured three—  
He found them sleeping ; He had looked on Death  
While they had slumbered, and its fettering dread  
Had conquered ; nor more feared He now to look  
On it than on its living image here.  
' The sleep of ignorance is yours, the sleep  
Of trust and triumph mine ; and when the foe  
Shall come ye will be startled and confused,  
And horror-stricken at his countenance,  
And in your cowardice smite with the sword ;  
I calm and still, since I have met the Foe,  
And vanquished him with spiritual arms.'  
Thus mused the Master while He gazed on them,  
And more in pity than complaint He said,  
' Could ye not watch with me one hour ?' In tears  
He turned away : He wept to think how short

Their rest would be ; how joyless and abrupt  
Their waking.

Quickly now the Devil flew  
Up to the realms of air, where his dark hosts  
Assembled were. A cloud of witnesses,  
Keenly they watched the strife ; all Hell was there !  
A moment brought their Prince into their midst,  
And thus, in haste, he cried, ' Our Foe prevails :  
Angel from heaven despatched has strengthened Him ;  
His fear of death is vanquished : longer stand  
Not idly gazing, but haste down, and join  
Your horrors thousand-fold against His soul ;  
Nor come as ye are wont, your faces all  
Are known to Him of old—not ignorant  
Of your devices He ; now put ye on  
Shapes varied as your numbers ; more obscene  
Than sin has e'er reduced ye to ; this day,  
If lost, shall see you brought to meaner state  
Than serpent's is. Naught shun ye therefore now  
Of hideous or ignoble, though to see  
Yourselves ye dread. Better the liberty  
To take a baser lot at will, than be  
Fixed by His will in an unchanging doom—  
Hell's princes, cherubim, and seraphim,  
Cursed like the serpent once, sunk then to worms,  
And man's Redemption be our Second Fall,  
And loss of all the royalty we gained.  
And thou, profound abyss of Hell, bring forth  
Abundantly new horrors ; thy huge womb

Impregnate 'gainst this hour ; deliver up  
The offspring manifold which ages long  
Thou hast been travailing with, to bring to birth  
In fulness of the times, when woman's seed  
Should bruise the Serpent's head !'

He ceased, and lo !

The host of cherubim and seraphim  
Assumed a myriad shapes of varied sort,  
All base, though terrible—angel no more.  
Not Gorgon, nor Chimera, nor the Hound  
Three-necked, nor Fury fierce, nor Hydra dire,  
Nor aught conceived in fable could express  
The ugliness or terror of their forms,  
Beyond all horror horrible, all baseness base.  
And the huge lips of Hell, disparting wide,  
Ejected load so foul, that e'en the fiends  
Sickened to see the misbegotten forms  
Wherewith the earth was deluged,—horrified  
To learn what sin could gender, though too soon  
Those forms familiar grew. Around the Son  
They gathered fast : like locusts on the wind  
They swarmed : dark'ning the moon ; like Egypt's frogs  
They covered all the ground ; some hissed, some yelled,  
Some barked, some howled, some shook their bloody locks,  
Some fiery arrows flung, some thrust with horns,  
Some belched out floods of fire, some bat-like flew,  
And others coiled around the trees ; yet none  
Was frog, or hound, or snake, but as it were  
A mixture of them all. It might be called

His own Creation, who the father is  
Of all abominable confusions, and alone  
Omnipotent to adulterate God's works,  
And to create a lie. *All falsehood this,*  
*Things made unnatural.*

Their discord loud  
 Far through the night resounded, though unheard  
 By ears of flesh—spirits alone hear spirits.  
 And Michael heard it where he guarding stood  
 At reverent distance. To the mountain's top  
 He sped, and lifted up his standard. Like  
 A fire he stood, and blazed. Heaven caught the sign,  
 And lo ! twelve legions of seraphic flames  
 Like lightnings flashed to earth ; the sudden glare  
 Illumined all the sky. Down from the hill  
 They rushed, an avalanche of fire, and through  
 The garden's glooms they streamed ; and gathering up  
 In dazzling column stood against their foes,  
 And through them would have swept, as roars a fire  
 Through a sere forest, and leaves naught behind  
 But waste and desolation. But from heaven  
 There fell a voice forbidding : ' Stay ! forbear !  
 No angel bands may mingle in the strife  
 Of the great Son of Man. He, He alone,  
 Shall fight and conquer.' Yet, so burned their zeal,  
 They scarce could be restrained ; but reasoning,  
 They saw that zeal might sin, so sheathed their swords,  
 And left their God sole champion in the field.

Their swords re-sheathed, the Powers of Darkness raged  
With tenfold wrath ; more dread their howls ; more fierce  
Their flames ; more menacing their attitudes ;  
More hideous their forms ; and round the Son  
They thicker came, and closer to Him pressed,  
Till, joining in a solid mass of night,  
They prisoned Him as in a vault of fire.  
Then calm, He lifted up His eyes and said,  
' Father, Thy will be done.' It was enough.  
Their raging ceased, the flames burnt deadly dim,  
Their threatenings died ; for when they saw Him stand  
In sorrow resolute, they stood in fixed despair.  
Yet but a moment stood, but sank to earth,  
While He passed through the midst, and set His heel  
Upon the Serpent's head.

Some space they lay  
As paralyzed—so stunned by their defeat.  
At length, their pride reviving, they rose up  
And sought their ancient forms, but sought in vain :  
The pride alone was left, the power was gone.  
To those same execrable shapes they chose  
(Reduced to sizes most diminutive)  
Their future life was doomed ; to be themselves  
The records of their crime, the monuments,  
Spite of themselves, of Christ's great victory.  
Suffered till now to wield the powers of air,  
Their principality was spoiled for aye.  
As lightning shot to earth, so Satan fell,  
To ascend to heaven no more ; dismayed, he saw

His palace vanish like the lightning cloud,  
To stain the skies no longer : destined he  
To roam where once he ruled, and on the scene  
Where stood his royal towers, outcast to stand  
And weep his perished glory : nor in earth  
Nor air permitted long to stay ; short time  
Allowed for e'en a wanderer's life ; the pit  
Prepared of old his prison-house to be,  
And the last foot-soil of the Vagrant Fiend,  
For ever cleansèd from the Face of Day.  
A kingly Servant once, he sank to be  
A servile King ; henceforth a King no more,  
But the dark Footpad of the universe—  
A roaring Lion prowling o'er the worlds.  
In vain cherubic or seraphic form  
He sought to re-assume ; he and his hosts  
Still base remained, nor found wherewith to make  
Their baseness royal look : unseemly rout  
Of loathsome, shapeless, despicable things,  
Great only in their mischief and conceit.  
The first that rose was Satan ; he the change  
First knew, then madly writhing in his rage—  
Unkingly rage—the rage of impotence—  
Fierce because futile—he essayed to speak,  
But found his words received with bitter scorn  
And mockery ; whereat he grew more wroth,  
And loftier air attempted, and himself  
He strove to be again ; but vainly strove  
To make such form look kingly, and afresh



Broke forth the raillery and drowned his words.

Not long the cause was hidden, for each one  
Evoked the other's scorn as each one tried  
To speak his thoughts, till, like conflicting waves,  
Fiend foamed 'gainst fiend, and swollen with passion strove  
In mutually repellent ridicule.  
And all that wide expanse, so still before  
In common suffering and despair, now tossed  
With ocean's wild, reduplicated roar,  
Deep called to deep, and every note was scorn.  
For each to other spake in different tongue,  
Tongues numerous as their shapes ; nor were their minds  
Less alien than their speech ; Hell never heard  
A riot so tumultuous. Each discerned  
A stranger in his friend, and stranger soon  
Sharpened to foe ; for ignorance gendered fast  
Suspicion, and suspicion chilled to hate ;  
Hate bristled into warfare ; then and there  
Sharp bickerings began, and rose to broils,  
And broils to battle swelled, and where they stood  
Erewhile against their common foe, they lay  
A sweltering, undistinguishable mass.  
Beelzebub cast out Beelzebub,  
And Satan saw his kingdom thousandfold—  
So rent and scattered ; saw each fiend become  
A Satan to himself ; and Babel's curse  
Hell's sad inheritance for evermore.  
While dimly in the distance he perceived,

With envy bitter, but now impotent,  
All men one language learn and war no more.

All ruined was except their vast conceit,  
Though it proclaimed how total was the wreck—  
Conceit the hollow wind that sweeps sheer through  
The garrulous ruins of an empty mind,  
Exulting in the mighty vacancy :  
No entrance gaining when the mind is whole.  
To heaven they flashed their eyes, and saw their place  
Fast filling with the seraphim (the air  
And all the powers of Nature henceforth given  
Into the hands of ministering spirits,  
Through whose benignant influence the ills  
Of Satan's usurpation gradually  
Should be removed, and the millennium come  
Of Nature and of Man, and by their power  
The bandit-Fiend be held in awe). The sight  
Aroused their anger ; they would dare th' attempt  
To dispossess them, nor of strength did doubt.  
All instantly were seized with like desire ;  
And though with hate they burned among themselves,  
The common passion caught them, like the sand  
From off the desert columned by the blast,  
In seeming whole, though unconsolidate.  
Whirling aloof, they stormed on Michael's host,  
As on a caravan the fiery dust  
Swept by the torrid whirlwind. Leader none  
Acknowledged now, their hurricane of wrath

Alone impelled them ; each strove for himself,  
One only in their fury dragonish.  
Fiercely they fought ; their shrunken size appeared  
To seraph's stature as are dragon-flies'  
To men's, less formidable, but their strength  
Sharpened to mighty meanness ; breadth and height  
Of angels' nature narrowed to a point  
Of smallness infinite ; hence, great the task  
To shield them off ; their power did not dismay,  
Their littleness provoked ; so hard to oppose  
Because so greatly inconsiderable.  
Now overhead they flew in clouds, and showered  
A fiery deluge on their enemies ;  
But as with clouds, the arrows upward shot,  
Pierced, and returned, and left no scar behind.  
Now underneath they swarmed and stung the steeds,  
And through the warriors' harness pricked, thus spread  
Confusion in the ranks ; now insolent,  
They dashed into the faces of the foe  
With blinding force, and to attack had been  
Like army spurring 'gainst the northern blast,  
When from his cloud heights inaccessible  
He pours his wildering drifts of snow and ice.  
The seraphim against the seraphim  
Could war, as Satan knew, alas ! too well  
To attempt such strife again ; but dragon foes  
Who fought, in their base littleness secure,  
The mighty seraphim were ill prepared  
To encounter. Even Michael stood perplexed ;

But stood not long in doubt : loud he invoked  
The Fiery Blast. The Breath of God passed by,  
They dropped upon the earth, their place no more  
Was found in heaven ; they lay upon the ground  
Thick as the leaves upon the forest strown.

Now in the distance flickered sudden lights,  
And the still ground pulsed with the measured tramp  
Of armed men ; nearer they came, and larger grew  
The flames, and more distinctly shook the earth ;  
And now the trees were blushing, and immediately  
The faces were discovered : Judas', too,  
Red with the guilty blaze. Straightway the Son  
Went forth to meet them, and such beauteous light  
Rose in His face that their fierce torches paled  
Like tapers at mid-day. They reeled and fell  
As from the face of God. Ne'er had they feared  
War's bloody brow, for battle was of man ;  
But this unweaponed, undefended calm,  
This beautiful serenity of life,  
This peace that blazed in its intensity,  
This had the touch of God : their sinews shrank  
Before it, like the wrestling patriarch's thigh  
Before the nameless and mysterious One  
With whom he strove. After brief pause, He broke  
Their death-like silence, and infused new warmth  
Into their frozen limbs. Judas released,  
Sprang forth to kiss his doom ; the Master bowed  
His welcome to accept, and with His power

They bound Him, and their Conqueror led,  
Far as He willed them, towards the eminence  
Where He would show the trophies openly,  
Which He had won this memorable night  
O'er the spoiled principalities and powers  
Of Sin, and Sorrow, Death, and Hell, and Man.

## BOOK V.

## ARGUMENT.

THE evil spirits find their speech return, at which their confidence revives—They endeavour to explain their late disorder—attribute it to the shock occasioned by their defeat—They apologise to one another for their fratricidal contest—and make general confession to Satan of their disloyalty, restoring him with great acclamation to his regal eminence and authority—and after brief debate they agree that since they have become so disorganised, and there is little time for consultation, they shall be left free each to his own device—The degeneration of their mode of assault—Examination of Christ before Annas and Caiaphas—They distribute themselves among the Jewish people—General insurrection against Jesus—The Sanhedrim convey the accused to Pilate—The rage of the accusers—The calmness of the accused—The fear and admiration of the governor—Jesus is sent to Herod—Brought back to Pilate—Pilate struggles to release him—He is sentenced—and scourged—Pilate's awe and admiration again awakened—Endeavours again to obtain His release—The Jews prevail—The triumph of the people—The dejection of the fiends—The despair of Judas.

## BOOK V.

NOW, strange, the Hosts of Hell discomfited  
Found their accustomed speech return : at which  
They marvelled greatly ; and immediately  
Sprang up the confidence that all their power  
Was not yet lost, nor their defeat so great  
As erst it seemed. And they attributed  
Their brief confusion to the sudden shock  
Of their discomfiture—their violent fall  
Deranging equally their thought and speech.  
For overpowering grief, or fear may work  
Bewilderment in angels as in men.  
So they explained their late disorder, and  
Themselves did reason into that belief ;  
Not suffering the thought that God, their strength  
Might have permitted them to renovate  
To make their wrath His purposes subserve,  
And bring confusion double on their heads.  
They instantly apologies exchanged ;  
And general confession made to him  
Who was their Ruler ; and again did lift  
Him to his regal eminence, with shouts  
Of ‘ Live, O King, for ever ! ever rule.’  
He to their acclamations bowed the while



His proud acknowledgments ; and lifting up  
His form deteriorated with a show  
Of power and dignity, he feigning, said  
He liked the change ; and with a flourish cried :  
' Show we the greatness of our minds and wills  
By glorifying these degenerate shapes  
With mighty deeds, and thus teach vaunting Heaven  
How Hell's great potentates and powers can turn  
Their loss to gain !' But time there was not now  
For flow of words. To deeds they must return :  
And they decided, after brief debate,  
Each should be free to choose his own device,  
Only uniting in the one design  
To persecute their Enemy. And this  
In common their devices had ; they were  
Alike contemptible and cowardly —  
The spite of weakness not the wrath of power.  
The shortening of their devilish potency  
Seen in their onslaught fierce upon His flesh,  
Thinking — such folly is bound up in sin —  
To triumph by the less where greater failed :  
Though also having no alternative,  
He had their spiritual war withstood.  
Him had the soldiers, by the apostate led  
Taken first to Annas : who to ensnare Him asked  
Both of His doctrine and His followers.  
He answered with a Countenance like Day :  
' I to the world spake openly. I taught  
In synagogues and in the Temple where

The Jews do most resort, and in the night,  
Or secretly have I said nothing. Why  
Askest thou Me then ? Them which heard Me ask.  
They know what I have said.' (For secret night  
Was theirs who had the Truth arrested. His  
The day who to the light came ever, that  
His word might have free course.) Which having said,  
One struck Him on the mouth ; for cowards have  
No language but a blow, and deem the truth  
May be struck dumb. Deceitful confidence !

Then did the priests and rulers long for day,  
That they might call their council. And they went  
One and another oftentimes from the hall,  
To see if daylight had begun to fleck  
The welkin's cheek : but the pale moon  
Seemed to wheel slowly down her western slope,  
And the great car of Night dragged heavily  
Her load of shuddering stars.

Timid at last

The morning came, and o'er the solemn hills  
Lifted her forehead white and blood-shot eye :  
And down the city towers the languid light  
Crept wearily, and dropped into the street.  
And as morn rose, rushed up the tearful mists  
Into her orb, and the young light grew blind.  
And when the mists were cleared, the angry wind  
Snatched hastily the cloud-skirts from the hills,  
And blindfolded the eye of risen day.

But through the empty, unawakened street  
Hurried the multitude ; who, as they ran,  
Chided the morning for her tardiness.  
And in their midst He walked. His brow was pale :  
Though not with languor of exhausted life ;  
But as the sun's after a night of storm,  
White through the mist across the wintry sea.

Then was the Council gathered, and came forth  
False witnesses accusing Him—their tongues  
Found to each other false, e'en as to Him :  
For lies are manifold, but Truth is One ;  
He answered not ; for lies confound themselves.  
Then Caiaphas exclaimed, with Babel-wrath,  
' Answerest Thou not ? ' And *him* He answered not.  
Wherefore he asked Him, ' Art Thou then the Christ,  
Son of the Blessed ? ' And He said, ' I am.  
And ye shall see the Son of Man enthroned  
On the right hand of God, and in the clouds  
Coming from Heaven ! ' Then did the high-priest rend  
His clothes and cry, ' Of further witnesses  
What need have we ? His blasphemy ye heard.'  
And they condemned Him all. And some began  
To spit on Him, and buffet, and blindfold,  
And strike Him in the face, and say, ' Declare  
Who smote Thee ! ' But He held His peace.

Meanwhile

A host of fiends distributed themselves  
Among the Jewish multitude : and they

Who had been formerly the Master's friends  
And terror of their rulers, suddenly  
Were seized with malice unaccountable,  
Raving with a demoniac thirst to drink  
His blood. Never was seen malice so blind,  
Hate so ferocious, madness so intense  
And universal. Yet none reason gave  
That was not more mad than the violence  
It sought to justify. Jerusalem  
Rose up like sea in storm. The excitement ran  
So high, that e'en the Governor prevailed  
Nothing against its fury—threatening him  
If venturesome enough to stem the tide.  
To him at early morn the priestly band  
Conveyed the Galilean doomed to death.  
It was a sea of turbulence and storm,  
And He was like a rock in steadfastness,  
Though not a rock. For it feels not the waves  
Which it disarms, but He felt every one.  
He was no stoic : but a hero true  
Whose heart could bleed. Hearts not of flint but flesh  
Are heroes, bearing every human woe  
With superhuman courage—men in tears  
In triumph like the gods. Pilate was struck  
To see such sensibility and strength,  
Such depth of feeling, and such meek reserve ;  
And asked Him, marvelling greatly, ' Hearest Thou  
How many things these witness ? ' But He spake  
Not e'en to him. At which he marvelled more.

Wherefore the Governor withdrew to hear  
The Prisoner for himself. Into the Judgment-hall  
He went, and the Accused went after him ;  
Alone together, confidentially  
Asked Pilate, ' Art Thou then their King ? ' To whom  
He answered, with an all-discerning glance,  
' Dost say this of thyself, or was it told  
Of Me by others ? ' With a Roman pride  
Pilate exclaimed, ' Am I a Jew ? the priests  
And Thine own nation have delivered Thee ;  
What hast Thou done ? ' To which the Prisoner,  
With loftiness as far excelling pride  
As heaven excels the earth, ' Of this vain world  
My kingdom is not ; if it were of earth  
Then would My servants fight, that to the Jews  
I should not be delivered ; but 'tis not  
From hence.' At which, both awed and wondering,  
Pilate exclaimed, ' Then art Thou King ? ' The Son,  
With majesty supernal, said, ' I am :  
To this end was I born, and for this cause  
Into the world I came, that to the truth  
I should bear witness. Every one that knows  
The truth obeys my voice.' Those words, ' The truth,'  
Disquieted thoughts dead and long at rest  
In Pilate's soul ; brought back, in vivid train,  
The faces of the bright and buried years—  
Years ere his heart had lost the bloom of love,  
Or his ingenuous, hopeful mind returned  
From its dark voyage of discovery,

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Dismasted, broken, rudderless — a wreck ;  
And with a sigh, sarcastically sad,  
He asked Him, ' What is truth ? who knoweth what ? '  
Nor waited for an answer, nor had eyes  
To read the Answer that before Him stood ;  
That Message from the undiscovered land,  
To tell men that beyond the flood of Time  
Was not the ice and silence of the grave,  
Annihilation's everlasting gloom ;  
But an eternal life and loveliness,  
Perennial summer and perpetual bliss,  
The home of angels and the rest of God.  
He, living Incarnation of the truth,  
The Light of that world as the Light of this ;  
Through ignorance of Whom the years of time  
Had been but one long, dreary, winter's night ;  
And reft of Whom the sunny fields of heaven  
Were changed into a polar solitude.  
In bitter haste the sceptic turned away,  
And plunged into the unmitigated dark.  
But though he stayed not to translate the Word,  
Or from the living Volume to obtain  
A *glimpse* of its deep meaning, yet he said,  
With candour, pattern for the infidel,  
To His accusers, ' Lo ! I find no fault.'

Afresh the storm broke forth. Again the Man  
Stood still and calm, a Pillar of pale light.  
' He stirreth up the people everywhere,

Throughout all Jewry, e'en from Galilee  
Unto this place !' cried they. When Pilate heard  
He was a Galilean, he perceived  
A way for his escape, for Galilee  
Was Herod's province. Therefore to his bar  
The Prisoner should be sent. A twofold gain  
He hoped from this expedient to derive;  
To rid his hands of a perplexing case,  
And to conciliate Herod. They of late  
Had been at enmity between themselves.

Thither they took Him ; and the king was glad  
To see the man of whom so many things  
Had been reported, and he hoped to have  
Some miracle performed. With many words  
He questioned Him ; and left no plan untried  
To tempt the Wonder-worker to His task.  
But all in vain the Tetrarch strove ; nor deed  
He wrought, nor word He spake, but stood and gazed  
Into the Tetrarch's guilty soul the while—  
Answer sufficient, had he not been blind :  
Worthy no other. Jewish profligate  
More had received than Roman infidel,  
Therefore less condescension he deserved.  
Defeated, mortified, his gladness turned  
To gall, he, with his men of war, began  
To set at naught the spiritual Power  
He could not carnalize. At length, arrayed  
In gorgeous robe, he sent Him back with words

Of friendly greeting to the Governor.  
And Superstition was made friends that day  
With Infidelity against the truth of God —  
Extremes of error which have ever met  
In strange alliance leagued against the Christ.

Unsentenced, unreleased, unjudged, unheard,  
The Man came back. And from His countenance  
The shadow of an awful fear drew o'er  
The heart of Pilate, as a great eclipse  
Over the world. Therefore he called the Jews,  
And to them said: ' Lo, I have found no fault  
In the accused ; nor aught has Herod found !  
I will chastise Him and then let Him go.'  
They flung his timid offer back with scorn,  
As waves toss back the refuse thrown from shore.

Wherefore he cast about for new device.  
It was a custom at the feast to grant  
The Jews a prisoner, and theirs the choice.  
A noted one now lay in bondage, charged  
With murder and revolt. Him Pilate brought,  
And set him beside Jesus. Contrast strange!  
Like Heaven and Hell together in one frame.  
And Pilate saw the contrast ; and he gazed  
Awe-struck upon the snow-white Purity  
Which stood beside the guiltiness, blood-red.  
And felt *his* soul wax crimson in the thought  
Of signing that Man's doom. And while he looked



A messenger came in, sent from his wife,  
Whose eye-balls had been scorched with the same sight  
Incarnadining all her woman's world :  
' Have naught to do with that just Man. This day  
I many things have suffered in a dream  
Because of Him.' Nor wonder when his heart  
Was so appalled by the Reality  
That he did start to hear a woman's dream,  
All sceptic though he was! though starting more  
To hear the cry, ' Away with Him! Release  
To us Barabbas.' Then the sun did seem  
With shame to blush into a bloody clot  
Upon the face of Heaven.

Then did he plead

As for his life with the unreasoning crowd :  
' What shall I do with Jesus, called the Christ ?'  
' Let Him be crucified !' exclaimed they all.  
They had been waiting only to be asked.  
' What evil hath He done ?' demanded he :  
Three times demanded he, and three times heard,  
Each time more fierce and more importunate,  
' Let Him be crucified !' No reasoning now  
Could stay the maddening torrent of their rage  
That surged before His judgment-seat, and lashed  
His feet with that one, wild, tempestuous cry,  
' Let Him be crucified !' Yet would he dare  
The dangerous task. Standing, he spread his arms  
Against the infuriated mob, and cried,  
' I have found nothing worthy death in Him ;

I will chastise Him then and let Him go.  
But now their faces gathered up so black,  
So wild their gestures grew, so loud their cry,  
And so imperative,—the priests o'er all  
Towering, and thundering so om'nously,  
That Pilate feared the city would be stormed.  
Then took he water, and his hands he washed,  
Saying before them all, 'Lo, I am free  
Of this just Person's blood!' They fiend-like shrieked,  
Their eyes and hands the while assaulting Heaven,  
'On us and on our children be His blood!'  
The passions of the people had prevailed  
O'er Conscience, Justice, Reasoning, and Law,  
And Jesus was delivered to their will.

Then did the soldiers lead the Victim, doomed,  
Into the common hall. They stripped Him there,  
And on His shivering back, with cruel wrath,  
Deepened their furrows, till the gory stream  
Mantled His shoulders like a purple robe.  
And then, with mirth more barbarous, they made  
A crown of thorns, and set it on His head,  
And in His right hand placed a reed; then o'er  
His new-dyed body flung a faded robe,  
And bowed the knee before Him, crying, 'Hail,  
King of the Jews!' But not for long could mirth  
Content them unless mixed with butchery,  
And snatching from His hand the reed, they drave  
The thorns into His brow; and while the blood

114      *The Roman bows to the Thorn-crown.*

Ran down His face, into its pure red tide  
They spat their cursèd filth — Sweet Springs of life  
Never defiled before ; e'en bearing that  
Into the ocean of forgetfulness  
And welling up anew !

And Pilate stood  
Beholding, though beneath his dignity,  
To see a flagellation ; but this Man  
Had taken him a prisoner : they led Christ,  
And Christ led Pilate ; where the Captive went  
The captivated followed. As he gazed  
The chains were closer drawn ; for as they sunk  
The Prisoner in disgrace, the *Man* rose up  
Sublimier for His woe, until He seemed  
Surpassing royal — diademed with thorns.  
The thorns the only mockery ; no mock-King  
The *Man* Himself ; His thorn-crown but the foil  
To a real Kingdom. Pilate dazzled stood,  
Nor soldiers saw nor heard ; saw but the *Man*,  
Only His silence listened to ; the tears  
Were taken captive on his cheek ; and there  
Fettered they lay, afraid to run their course ;  
For pity seemed to insult the Majesty  
That made its grief a throne, and sat supreme  
Above the world's contempt. And Pilate caught  
A glimpse of His great meaning when He said,  
' My kingdom is above this world ; ' he saw  
Attraction there beyond the power of thrones ;  
And wan the might of sceptre looked beside

That Man's unsceptred kingliness of soul.

Say, sacred Muse ! if Pilate in that hour  
Knew aught of the Divine, constraining power  
Which the blest Man had prophesied should stream  
On all men at His lifting up ? for all  
On earth it draws, though few are drawn to heaven.  
Some wondrous charm he felt : for forth he came,  
And out of the abundance of his heart  
Preached to the people. Doubting not that what  
Had so compelled his homage would wake theirs,  
He cried, ' Behold the man ! ' The man came forth  
Wearing the purple robe and crown of thorns.

But dead Religion lies in deeper sleep  
Than unawakened Scepticism. The priests  
Trampled with extirpating rage on Him  
Before whose greatness the proud Roman sunk  
Admiring and appalled. They clamoured still,  
' Let Him be crucified ! ' With righteous wrath  
The Governor said, ' Take ye and crucify.  
I find no fault in Him.' Answered the priests :  
' We have a law, and by our law He ought  
To die, because He made Himself the Son of God.'  
But that which was old cause of hate to them  
Struck a new fear in him :—' The Son of God !  
What might that title mean ? Oft had he heard  
Of gods descending from their bright abodes  
To walk the world terrene ; and though long since

He had renounced his faith in these strange tales,  
And counted them but poets' phantasies ;  
Yet here was Man whose air was more like one  
Of higher race than soul of mortal mould.  
He shuddered as he thought upon the words,  
'The Son of God : ' afraid before, he grew  
Still more afraid, and the man's heart o'ercame  
The sceptic's creed.

                                Again he took the Man  
Into the hall ; and asked with ashy lip,  
'Whence art Thou ? ' But He answered him not.  
Enough had Pilate heard and seen that day  
To make such question needless ; more could none  
Expect, or have. There is a limit, which  
Infinite mercy will not pass to save  
The soul, though infinite its worth—to it  
That silence warned him near. It spake, alas !  
To ears but half awakened ; and afresh  
The old, unconquered pride rose up ; and all  
The wondrous Stranger's dignity was lost  
In his own self-importance ; while he cried,  
'Speakest Thou not to me ? dost Thou not know  
That I have power to crucify, and power  
To set Thee free ? ' Lifting His eyes to One  
Greater than Pilate, greater than Himself,  
He said, 'Thou couldest have no power at all,  
Except it were first given thee from Heaven.'  
His modesty awed Pilate's soul still more.

Again he wrestled with the Jews to win  
The Prisoner's freedom ; but the cry arose :  
' If thou let this Man go, thou art no friend  
Of Cæsar ; whoso makes himself a king  
Is Cæsar's enemy.' The crisis came  
That comes to all. The balances were poised.  
No man but puts his heart into the scale  
For Mammon or for God. Pilate the Jews  
Called to decide—' Barabbas, or the Christ ?'  
Now they to him—' The Christ, or Cæsar ?' He  
Paused but a moment, then threw in his soul.  
The scale up flew : Cæsar's firm friend he stood,  
And Christ's reluctant foe. The strife was o'er,  
Pilate went in ; and Christ came out — to die !

The priests and people rent the air with shouts  
Of fiendish triumph ; but the fiends themselves  
Stood silent with dismay, for He had passed  
Through the tumultuary scene unmoved,  
And counted scorn, and scourge, and thorns alike,  
As the last feeble spite of vanquished foe.  
For from the garden's conflict He had come  
Robed in the power of victory Divine ;  
And luminous in His unclouded peace,  
His victory had shone with calmest ray,  
And filled the Judge with deep, admiring awe,  
And them with terror inexpressible ;  
And as He went to die they followed Him,  
But felt like captives in a conqueror's train.

They led Him to the slaughter, like a beast  
Bearing his burden. But the flesh was weak,  
And sank beneath it, though the willing spirit  
Was yearning for the burden infinite,  
Of which the Cross was but the feeble sign.  
With transient pity moved, or afraid  
That dying of exhaustion He might cheat  
His persecutors of their savage sport,  
They took the Cross from off Him, and laid hands,  
Sudden and rough, upon a passer-by,  
Simon by name, and him compelled to bear  
The oppressive load. Relieved, He, like a lamb,  
Went with the butchers to the Place of Skulls,  
Bearing, though uncompelled, that load of grief  
Which He must bear alone. Stranger nor friend,  
Nor willing nor compelled, could bear His cross.

And Judas stole from the tumultuous throng  
Pale as the Shadow ; for as he stood by,  
Through the long watches of the dreadful night,  
And through the slow inquiry of the morn,  
And heard the charges false and cruel taunts,  
And saw the spitting and the buffeting,  
The purple robe and thorns all dyed with blood,  
His conscience said, ' Cruel and bloody man !'  
And when he heard the solemn sentence passed,  
And saw the Master's sweet, submissive calm —  
The attribute of conscious innocence,  
His heart turned deadly faint, and he went out

A self-arrested, self-judged criminal.  
He had not time to vent his anguished soul  
Ere the rude crowd poured from the Governor's house  
And caught him in its stream ; but sick at heart,  
He could not go ; so lagged, and soon was lost.  
He sought a lonely spot, where he might weep ;  
But found, like Esau, he had sold his all,  
And there was no recovery of his right,  
Nor place for his repentance. Dark despair  
Straight changed the heavens to brass, his heart to stone ;  
He hastened to the Temple, in his hand  
The money burning like the fuel of hell.  
At the priests' feet he flung it, like the curse  
Of a damned spirit, while he shrieked — ' I have  
Betrayed the innocent blood ! ' and on the floor  
The money rang ' the innocent blood, ' and frowned  
The Temple, echoing ' the innocent blood. '   
Then, in the crimson midnight rushing out,  
Upon a tree he hanged himself, and threw  
His life to him, to whom it had been sold ;  
Worthless to all beside, load to himself  
Intolerable, and the Betrayer joined  
The Tempter in his fall and his despair.



## ARGUMENT.

THE Saviour on the cross—Saves the penitent thief—Mary the mother standing beneath the cross lamenting—John's soliloquy about his Master—Addresses Mary—her sorrowful reply—John comforts her by calling to her remembrance the signs and wonders that attended His birth, as well as the miracles which He wrought, all of them evidences of a superhuman nature and a wondrous destiny—Jesus beholds His mother and John—John takes Mary away to his own home—The supernatural darkness, caused by the hiding of the Divine countenance—The anguish of the Son—Cause of wonder to Satan, who, not knowing the exceeding sinfulness of sin, has not conceived of God's hiding His face from His *Son* as an element in the mysterious suffering to be endured by Him—Takes it for a sign that the Redeemer has failed in some way, and that God has therefore forsaken Him—Great triumph among the infernal spirits—The Son prays to the Father, but there is no answer, by which the triumph of the evil ones is increased—Jesus calls upon the angels to minister to Him—they are silent—Still greater triumph among the devils—The sword of justice is seen piercing the Messiah's soul—Jesus bows Himself to the Father's stroke, but complains of the assault of the evil ones—There being no answer, their triumph becomes overwhelming, in the midst of which the Saviour's heart breaks with the excess of grief—The light suddenly returns—God's face is seen—Discomfiture of the powers of darkness—They rush in the greatest consternation into Hell—The angels minister to the dying Saviour—One nails to His cross the titles of the vanquished foe—All their hosts break into song—they cease—Jesus dies—His triumphal chariot appears—It receives the soul of Jesus—Beneath its wheels the earth quakes, the rocks rend, the graves are opened, the veil of the temple is rent, and Hell apprehensively trembles from beneath—He arrives in Hell—Descends from His chariot, and walks across the lake of fire—Ascends the hill on which Hell's palace is erected—At His word it vanishes away—At His signal His angels bring His chariot-throne and plant it on the hill—He despatches an angelic squadron to search out the fiends, and bring them to Him bound—They depart on their expedition—They discover the foe at the bottom of a lake—They bring the whole host to the Judge—Sitting on His chariot-throne, now become a judgment-seat, He opens the Book, and reads the history of the Evil One's crimes, reciting his former rebellion, and tracing his course up to the present—Then passes judgment upon him and his hosts—Triumphal procession through the deeps—He takes the keys of Hell from the porter as He passes through the gates on His way to Paradise—Crosses the gulf—A brief notice of the burial of His body by Joseph and Nicodemus.

## BOOK VI.

THEY stripped Him of His garments, and His hands,  
Extended, nailed; also His feet; and then  
The bloody work was over, and the Cross  
Stood bare and bleak on Golgotha; while He  
Hung shivering in the wind, nor shelter found,  
Save in two crosses that beside Him reared  
Spread their gaunt arms. Each cross held out a thief,  
To insult the Innocence that none would shield.  
But insult saw He none; in death, as life,  
The Friend of sinners; where the lost were found,  
There found was He the Shepherd of the lost;  
Still saving others when He could not save  
Himself, and, with His death-destroying hand,  
Plucking a dying spirit from the fire.  
Nor threatened He nor murmured, though from one  
Stormed down upon His latest work of love  
A bitter blast, that smote Him where no wind,  
However keen, could enter. His reward  
Was great enough, when in His riven heart  
He hid the homeless wanderer secure,  
And bore him in the comfortable cleft  
To the fair Paradise, where tempest blows,  
And wanderer roams, no more. So sweetly housed,

Well might he chide his fellow fugitive  
Who fled into the outer wilderness  
Heaven never visits, rather than submit  
To the Good Shepherd's care, and, comfort strange  
For dying hour, his soul soothed with the thought,  
'There Shepherd seeks no more.'

Beneath His cross

His Mother stood, and much she longed to lay  
His bleeding head upon her gentle breast,  
To heal His ragged wounds and stay their tide.  
Lamenting loud she came ; with reverent love  
She kissed His feet, and washed them with her tears ;  
Washed them in vain, the sorrowing wounds wept on,  
Mourning in purple drops His heart away.  
Slow she returned, and burst her swelling grief  
Upon the breast of John, who, Mary-like,  
Sat still at Jesus' feet, and fixed his gaze  
Upon the Face he loved to contemplate :  
His work through life to sit and rest his eyes  
Upon his Lord ; those heaven-deep eyes, so full,  
So spiritually calm, reflecting all  
The infinite of Heaven in Jesus' face,  
And handing down the mirror to the world.  
Yet saying it was but a broken glass,  
Reflecting Him with but a partial ray ;  
And that the world, though one great crystal sea,  
Had shown but inconsiderable part  
Of the immensity of Truth in Him :  
And 'neath his fragment-mirror writing this

‘ Come, Lord, come quickly, Thou canst ne’er be told ;  
Come show to men the Infinite Thou art.’


‘ Blest are the pure in heart, they shall see God,’  
(Thus the beloved disciple mused the while  
He looked on that great sight), ‘ so said the Lord.  
Promise fulfilled to many a humble soul  
That waited for redemption. Simeon,  
Who saw, and wished to die because the sight  
Had spoiled his eyes for everything but Heaven ;  
And Anna, and His blessed Mother here,  
And they at Bethany ; and Magdalene,  
And many a soul *impure* that loathed itself,  
Struggling to find the Fount of Cleansing Light,  
All have beheld their God ; the Publicans  
And sinners came and saw, my ears have heard  
Their grateful testimony ; but our priests  
And scribes who know the law, and meditate  
Upon it day and night, these have seen naught.  
Strange that they have not, for I see it now,  
Clouded, but still unquenched, that wondrous Light  
Which John the Baptist saw and witnessed of,  
When looking on Him as He walked, he cried :  
‘ Behold, the Lamb of God !’ and I who heard,  
Saw and believed, and followed on to know,  
And found my home in Him, and rested there.  
I cannot solve the mystery, yet am sure  
Of what my eyes have seen, are seeing now,  
And calm and constant, in the sight I rest.’

Then to the blessed Mother spake aloud :  
‘ O woman, highly favoured ! dost thou yet  
Remember what the holy Simeon said,  
When taking in his arms the Heaven-sent Child  
(The words I oft have heard thy lips repeat) :  
“ Lord, lettest Thou Thy servant go in peace,  
For I have Thy salvation seen ? ” to whom  
It was revealed that death he should not see  
Till he had seen the Christ ; and seeing Him,  
Longed to see death, earth so dim, and Heaven was  
Alone sufficient to sustain his joy.’

‘ Well I remember, and good Simeon sleeps  
In Abraham’s bosom now. Would I were there,’  
She said ; ‘ where no sword pierceth, weep no eyes,  
The wicked trouble not, and weary hearts  
Are quiet and at rest ; for earth hath naught  
In store for me but tears. His sun goes down  
While yet ’tis noon, and with it falls my night :  
A darkness which ’tis not in earth to cheer,  
Lost only where both joy and grief expire,  
In the still house where all the fathers sleep.’

To whom thus John : ‘ Let not thy heart so fail,  
This cannot be the end. Think of the signs  
Attendant on His birth : the Angels’ song,  
Heard by the shepherds on the Bethlehem hills,  
And the new star which God hung out from heaven,  
To guide the wise men to His feet from far’

Who, warned of Him in visions of the night,  
Sought not again the king, but home returned  
Another way ; and when the king was wroth,  
And slew the Innocents, the Child was safe  
In Egypt, whither thou hadst flown by night,  
God having sent His angel to forewarn  
Thy husband of the peril. Then twelve years  
He scarce had seen, ere at Jerusalem  
Thou foundst Him 'mong the doctors of the law,  
Hearing their wisdom, and astonishing  
The learned men with His : wisdom how great  
Since come to years, all we can testify  
Who have been with Him from the first : no man  
E'er spake like Him, our enemies themselves  
Being judges ; and the works He wrought were like  
The words He spake. He fed the hungry, healed  
The sick, the lepers cleansed, and raised the dead ;  
Works wrought in God, which, when the Baptist sent  
From Herod's prison, saying, " Art Thou He,  
Or look we for another ?" He set forth  
In order to the messengers, and said :  
" Go show to John the things which ye have seen."  
And is the Cross to be the end of all  
These signs and wonders ? no ; it cannot be.  
I, like thyself, am staggered at the sight ;  
Yet many a word of His that seemed so strange  
When spoken, now doth comfort me. Last night  
He said to Simon Peter, " What I do,  
Simon, thou know'st not now, but thou shalt know



Hereafter : ” and before this mystery  
I stand with reverence, as before the veil  
That hides the face of God.’

The Master saw

His Mother and the Follower whom He loved  
Standing together : saw her weep, and him  
Striving to comfort her with His brave words  
And tender : and a smile dawned in His face,—  
Approving smile to John, and comforting  
To Mary ; and it sweeter seemed to them  
Than the full summer on His lips of old,  
Because all winter was the world to Him.  
‘ Woman, behold thy son,’ He said to her.  
Then, ‘ Son, behold thy mother,’ said to him.  
Brief, but sufficient for love’s eagle sight ;  
The Master’s glance told all.    Mary to John  
Drew trustfully, and John obedient placed  
His arm round her protectingly ;  
And from that scene too painful for her sight,  
He gently her reluctant steps constrained,  
And took her to his home.

Soon as they reached

The door, they saw the sun turn black as death,  
And from the noontide firmament drop night.  
His light the Original recalled ; not from  
The sun inseparable, but into him  
An earthen vessel, poured from the Pure Source  
At the world’s dawn.    The innumerable suns  
Are but transparent urns, which He has filled

From His essential glory who is Light.  
The Day He now withdrew ; and Night became  
Supreme and universal : when His face  
He darkened, all the worlds grew dark : 'twas noon  
Without a sun, 'twas night without a star.

Up to this hour, the Devil and his hosts  
Had stood in speechless wonderment and awe.  
No sign had passed, no word been spoken, not  
A sound of boasting, or of ridicule,  
Been heard. Men *only* mocked and railed, and wagged  
The head. The fiends stood still as stones, or lay  
Like waves of ocean struck by polar frost ;  
And every shout of human triumph smote  
Upon them like a knell of doom. His death  
And all its bloody show of circumstance  
No cause of joy to them while still His soul  
Remained supreme in its obedience —  
The cross its Throne. Spirits are not like men,  
To whom death seems destruction. In His flesh,  
Bleeding and quivering, triumphed not the fiends ;  
They saw the Regnant Soul within.

But now  
Satan beheld the supernatural gloom ;  
Beheld the stars struck blind ; the crystal sky  
Change to opaque as to a prison vault ;  
Though fearing not,—darkness his element,  
But wondering beyond measure ; of the cause  
Of this unwonted Night not ignorant —



God's clouded Countenance : but to divine  
Wherefore 'twas hidden from His Son beloved  
(Not knowing sin's exceeding sinfulness),  
His skill surpassed : and that 'twas veiled from Him  
Satan could have no doubt, for men saw but  
The natural effect,—blind to the Cause.  
Christ saw the Spiritual Fact ; and while  
The world lay cowering 'neath a darkened sky,  
The Son hung crying for the Face of God.

For, as a child among the wilds of hills,  
Fears not the night,—the father by his side—  
His face the Orb that cheers the midnight way :  
But lost, though summer's brightest noonday beam  
Lend the unfriendly solitude its smile,  
Beholds but danger and the face of death—  
Each chasm dark a hungry dragon's mouth,  
And a grim giant tall and terrible  
Each swelling crag and cliff, the trailing cloud  
A spirit's mantle long and white—expects  
To feel an ice-cold arm wind round his neck,  
Or sudden clutch of some huge monster's claw ;  
And, creeping underneath a bush—his face  
Caverned in both his hands, with sobs suppressed,  
He fears to start the silence with a cry  
Lest to his call some savage thing should come—  
So to the Son was midnight as midday  
When God was near ; but losing Him, a loss  
Ne'er felt till now, He double darkness saw

With body and with soul, though terrors none  
Fancied, appalled Him : but instead, far worse  
Than childhood's phantom-raising fears e'er feigned,  
Or Guilt's unquiet grave disburdenèd  
To glare upon the sleeper's sleepless sight ;  
The abhorred realities of Hell enclosed  
His guiltless soul, more formidable now  
Than in the garden, for no angel's face  
Appeared : Darkness alone was visible,  
And they who habit it ; and though the hosts  
Of angels, countless as the stars in heaven,  
Clustered around Him, poised on reverent wings,  
Not one did glimmer through the stony dark :  
The Maker's glory hid, their light was quenched.  
He looked, and there was none ; He wonderèd  
That none upheld ; He saw Himself alone,  
Saving the dreadful presence of the fiends,  
These gathered round Him fast, close came, and gnashed  
Their teeth, grown bold in His forsakenness,  
And mad to be revenged ; nor did despair  
Of victory, for He was wildered sore  
To see His situation—Fatherless  
And angel-less ; and to each other said,  
' God hath forsaken Him, now persecute  
His soul, and take it ; there is none to save.'

Three hours they ceased not their tormenting rage.  
Nor ceased His tears to cry imploringly,  
As they fell down and clung upon His breast,

'Where is Thy God?' Inly His heart replied  
With bitter prayers, 'Be not so far, O God,  
Trouble is near, and there is none to help;  
For bulls have compassed Me, they gape on Me  
As ravening lions; I am poured out  
Like water; all My bones are out of joint,  
And in My bowels melted is My heart.  
For the assembly of the wicked ones  
Have Me enclosed, they look on Me and stare;  
Innumerable evils hedge Me round,  
So that I am not able to look up;  
Be not far from Me, O my God! My Strength,  
Haste to My help.'

But answer none was heard:

And by the silence boldened, such a howl  
The infernal wolves set up, that hideous Night  
Seemed doubly hideous. Angels then first knew  
The sense of fear, and to each other drew  
With shuddering wings. Hell rose in triumph full.

Now through the body of the darkness burnt  
A sword of fire that passed sheer through the Cross  
And thunder rolled along the iron sky—  
Thunder it seemed to mortals, but He knew  
The Voice Almighty, and it spoke in wrath:  
'Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, 'gainst  
The Man that is My fellow; Shepherd, smite,  
And let the sheep be scattered.' His strong heart  
Dissolved like wax in the Consuming Fire,

And yearning for some hand to bring relief,  
As the rich man for drop of water begged  
To cool his tongue in the tormenting flame,  
(If Sacrifice with Victim might compare)  
He cried, ' Oh ! is it nothing to you, all  
Ye angels, that erewhile did minister,  
That in the desert brought Me food from Heaven,  
And water from the crystal fount of God,  
Behold, and see where'er unseen to Me  
Ye watching stand ! was any sorrow e'er  
Like Mine, wherewith the Lord hath visited  
My soul in His fierce anger ? from above  
Hath He sent fire into My bones ; My skin  
Is like a summer drought ; My tongue, it cleaves  
Unto My mouth ; My heart is withered up ;  
In flesh and soul I thirst.'

They heard and wept ;  
But might not otherwise their sympathy  
Express, till the great Sacrifice for sin  
Was finished.

As the ocean in a storm  
Adds its prolonged and far-resounding roar  
To the explosive thunder, and reflects  
The anger, bursting from heaven's swollen breast,  
Upon its deeply-heaving bosom dark ;  
So to the Voice of God the hosts of Night  
Presumptuous, joined their clamorous uproar,  
While in their sea of eyes with hate profound

They mocked Heaven's incommunicable wrath.

Now meekly did the patient Sufferer say  
Beneath the thunder of the Father's power ;  
' Father, Thy will be done ; for sacrifice  
And offering Thou didst not desire ; in these  
Thou hadst no pleasure, offering for sin,  
Burnt-offering, the blood of bulls and goats,  
In these Thou didst delight not ; then said I,  
I come to do Thy will delightful ; Lord,  
Thy law is in My heart, a broken heart  
Thou seekest, and a broken heart is Mine,  
I lay it on Thine altar—sacrifice.'

But when He saw the brood of Night their rage  
Distend, He cried, ' O Lord ! how long, how long,  
Wilt Thou look on and see My foes rejoice ?  
Plead Thou My cause, nor let the Avengers say,  
So would we have it, we have swallowed Him.  
O rescue Me from their destructions ; save  
My darling from the lions—from the dogs.  
Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up  
For My salvation ; stop their way, O God !  
With Thy far-lightening spear ; Thy standard lift  
Against the enemy that like a flood  
Cometh upon Me to engulf My soul.'

As when a hurricane the thundering waves  
Hurls headlong o'er the vessel, that before

Rode eminent, though sorely tossed and strained :  
So did the might of Hell, to th' utmost swollen,  
O'erwhelm the Sufferer in its billowy fire :  
Long space the floods prevailed ; about His head  
The weeds of Death were wrapped ; e'en to His soul  
The waters compassed Him ; He fathomed all  
The mountain roots of Sin, He tore them up  
In His almighty anguish, and the load  
Accumulating on His soul He bore,  
Till, from Hell's belly in extremest pain,  
He cried : ' Save me, O God ! My God, I sink !  
The waters are come in unto My soul ;  
Let not the pit her mouth upon Me shut ;  
For with reproach My heart is broken, and  
My life draws near the grave ; My God ! My God !  
Why hast Thou Me forsaken ? ' Here His heart  
Broke with its fatal grief, nor strength retained,  
Save strength to die. Hell roared with all her waves ;  
The depths resounded ; shuddered all the heavens,  
Such trembling never had Creation felt ;  
Such jubilation Hell had never known.

Yet was the triumph but a moment's space ;  
For from the heavens broke forth the light so calm  
That fled the Powers of Darkness like the shades  
Before the godlike countenance of morn.  
Not one was left of the unnumbered host,  
That underneath the universal shield  
Of Night had raged and deemed their victory sure.

Like herd of buffaloes by horsemen driven,  
They burst across the wastes of Tartarus,  
Tore up the fiery soil with frantic hoofs,  
And bellowed through the hollow deep so loud  
That the vast concave threatened instant fall ;  
Nor stayed their flight, till in the dark recess  
Of the profoundest Hell they hid themselves  
From the pursuing brightness of His face  
Who sat unveiling it upon the Throne.  
While from the heavens recomforting, swept down  
Ten thousand times ten thousand shining forms,  
To crown the Victor's head, and at His feet  
To cast their amaranthine wreaths, fresh culled  
From heavenly bowers ; the sacred fragrance rose,  
As from a mount of incense, and His soul  
Filled with Divine refreshment ; and while one  
A golden hammer took, and to His cross  
Nailed up the titles of the vanquished Foe—  
' God of this world and Prince of powers of air '—  
And left them on that Tree of Curse to flaunt  
Like torn and tattered rags, condemned to rot,  
And with their glittering guilt no more affront  
The face of God, the choirs angelic burst  
With liberated praise, that through their eyes  
Welled forth in joyful tears, and from their tongues  
Gushed out in floods of song, wherein they told  
How His right hand and holy arm alone  
Had gotten Him the victory ; though compelled  
Their joyous ardours to suppress again,

And keep their crown of praise till He should come  
Into the full inheritance of bliss,  
Of which this tribute in the hour of death  
Was earnest just and meet. Each veiled his face,  
And bent it low within his reverent plumes,  
While the great Conqueror said, with Son-like trust :  
' Father, into Thy hands I yield My soul,'  
And bowed His head and died.

Then from the North  
Rushed forth a whirlwind and a fiery cloud,  
And from the ruddy vapour wheeled and flew  
A chariot of living creatures ; wheel  
Circling in wheel, wing joined to wing, and o'er  
The living creatures' heads a firmament  
Of crystal lay ; and on the pavement bright  
A sapphire throne was set, and o'er the throne  
A rainbow smiled : it came beside the Cross ;  
And He ascended to His royal seat.  
Then flashed along the living orbs ; the sound  
Was like the Almighty's voice ; earth quaked,  
Rocks rent, graves gaped, the mountains trembling heard,  
And the perpetual hills obeisance did,  
While His great presence passed ; Moriah shook  
To its foundations, and the veil was rent ;  
And as the apprehensive ocean swells  
When storms are on the march, so did the deep  
Move from beneath, and with its tongue of surg  
Sound the alarm along the breathless shore.  
Nor had the warning struck the end remote,



Ere He had passed Hell's adamantine gates,  
And in the centre stopped His burning wheels.

He stood; and with His glance He measured all  
The boundless gulf, and lightened as He searched  
The fathomless, impenetrable night;  
Then straight across the Lake of Eire He took  
His unattended way, as once He walked  
Upon the stormy sea; the liquid flame  
Spread underneath Him like His own pure sky.  
He moved in sunlike splendour through the dark,  
Though light He none gave to the spirits damned,  
But with excess of brightness struck them blind.  
They all around, upon the billows tossed,  
Struggled to 'scape His glance, and from His path  
Fled through the sulphurous surge, that like a fount,  
After His burning gaze, seemed summer cool.

On to the golden hill, where Lucifer  
Had reared his Palace high, the Victor strode—  
Palace, which like an exhalation rose,  
As tells the Poet, by the various toil  
Of fallen angels, though incredible  
Their speed in raising it. At His great word  
The massy fane like exhalation fled,  
In twinkling of an eye; nor was there left  
A broken column or a tottering wall  
To chronicle the memory of its crimes;  
Nor e'en a scar upon the hill to mark

Where stood the Temple-Palace of Hell's god,  
Who oft had sat upon his thunder-shrine,  
And seen the lake smoke like a hecatomb  
Of savour sweet to his unbounded hate.

And at a signal, from that eminence  
Seen instantly, they sped His Chariot-throne  
Through the vast continuity of gloom ;  
And, as the lightnings leap from east to west,  
So in a point of time it cleared the gulf,  
And on the hill-top stood, with thousand eyes  
Blazing upon the wide circumference.

Then an angelic squadron He despatched,  
With high commission to search out the Fiend  
And all his host, in whatsoever cave  
Or cover hid, and bring them to Him bound.

Kindling their torches, through the blackness dense  
They flew ; from one hand streamed the flame,  
A sword flashed in the other ; round the coast  
They, vigilant, passed, and every cave explored ;  
Scoured every plain, discovered every gorge,  
Through every vapour burnt, and every lake  
Swept lightening to its bed. At length they found  
Their foe, secreted 'neath a pitchy pool,  
Housed in the mighty hollows of the rocks,  
And screened with a roof of monstrous growths,  
Such as abound in the infernal lakes.

Touched by the points of the angelic swords,  
They, like ten thousand alligators, rose,  
And reared their horrid heads with threatening mien.  
But, fearless as a keeper in the den  
Confronts a savage beast, and, menacing,  
Subdues the growling monster to his feet,  
So did the angels quickly awe the fiends  
Into abhorred submission, and, fast bound  
With terror, led them to the Judge.

Beneath

His judgment-seat, erected on the hill  
Whence Hell's proud fane had fled, both small and great  
They came, innumerable; the Golden Book  
He opened, wherein all their deeds were graven  
With point of diamond, and by those deeds  
He judged them, while to Satan thus He said :  
' In the great Name of Him thou hast defied,  
In presence of the angels whom of old  
Thou didst first tempt, and on behalf of man  
Whose second Head I am, I now pronounce  
Thy further doom ; all judgment unto Me  
Committed is, as Son of God and man —  
God's equal Delegate, man's Kinsman true.  
Thy first offence was great, for great the trust  
In thee reposed ; above the angels high  
Thou stoodst ; but that which was thy glory thou  
Didst change into thy shame ; wast not content  
To be God's godlike servant, but must sit  
As God Himself, and honours have which none

But God receives ; and rich rewards and gifts,  
Entrusted to thee to bestow on those  
Whom, for their service eminent, thou shouldst  
Deem worthy of advancement, thou didst use  
As bribes to win thee greater reverence.  
Thou mad'st thyself an idol, and command'st  
The heavens to worship thee as image of,  
And way of access to, the Invisible—  
Relations to the Infinite which none  
But Infinite could bear. God is the way  
To God, and His own image is. Of Him  
Unutterably glorious, likeness none  
Can Heaven or Earth, or Height or Depth produce.  
At thine unauthorised decree third part  
Of Heaven fell down, and rendered reverence  
To th' unauthenticated image. Thence  
Began Idolatry, the mother sin ;  
Earth since, the temple for a myriad things  
Called God, and worshipped more than God Himself,  
Who is alone the Blessed evermore.  
Father of lies, this was thy primal lie,  
Most cunningly in Truth's fair semblance veiled,  
The truth in these last days revealed in Me,  
The Image of His Person, and the Way  
Alike for angels in the heights, and men,  
Whom to adore, and see, and serve, is God's  
Whole will, and their own duty, bliss, and life.  
All other likenesses are counterfeits  
Of the Incarnate Word, and thou, the god

Of those who worship them ; for thou hast found  
The place on earth thou couldst not find in Heaven.  
And since thou couldst not be the angels' god,  
Thou turnedst to be their enemy ; thy pride  
Wounded, inflamed thee with revenge, and thence  
Did mortify thy pure affections, and  
Thou didst accuse thy brethren before God  
Of breach of loyalty to His great will,  
And pray for retribution swift ; whereon  
A day of judgment was ordained ; and when  
The hour arrived the judgment-trump was blown,  
And to its summons all the angels came,  
With thee, and thy false witnesses. The cause  
Was fully heard, and thou a slanderer proved —  
A liar and an adversary : hence  
The Judge decreed that thou shouldst be expelled  
From office and from Heaven ; Michael the charge  
Received to execute the sentence just.  
Thee and thy host he and his angels led ;  
But led resisting, wherefore from the throne  
God shot His thunders, and thy ranks were driven  
Into the dreary wilderness, beyond  
The realm of happiness, and light, and love.  
Since suffered to go up and down in space,  
Thou hast set up a throne to insult the heavens,  
Thy liberty employed to exalt thyself  
Among God's new created family,  
And in His temple new to sit as God,  
Filling the world with idols, all thine own

Similitudes ; vile and corrupt, called gods,  
But devils all of them, except in name.  
And once so vain in thy success become,  
Didst ask of Me to worship thee ; for thou  
By kingdoms counted hast thy worshippers,  
And writ thy title, blasphemous and bold,  
In ruined Nature, ' Prince of powers of air '—  
The Idol and Usurper of the earth.  
For, being crafty, thou didst take by guile  
The unsuspecting soul of piety,  
That for some token visible did seek  
Whereby to approach its Maker ; the pure sun,  
Fair moon, and shining host of stars,  
Thou didst propose unto its reverent thoughts,  
And having won on its simplicity,  
Didst straightway introduce the baser forms  
Of man corruptible, and birds, and beasts,  
And creeping things, which in their fallen state  
Are fit resemblances of thee, through whom  
Unwilling nature has been subjected  
To vanity ; by Me to be restored  
To its first beauty, wherein all shall see  
The lineaments of His original  
And incorruptible magnificence  
Of whom all things were made the witnesses,  
Though none of them His likeness. Now begins  
Nature's regeneration and thy fall.  
It is thy judgment hour, thou art cast out :  
Thy gods shall famished be : I, lifted up

Will draw the nations to Myself; the false  
Discovered by the Image True—the Face  
In which all knowledge of His glory shines—  
The Express Image of the Invisible!  
For, for this cause the Son was manifest,  
The Devil's dark inventions to destroy.  
Now art thou judged, thy principality  
Is taken from thee; the angelic home  
Thou enterest not, nor save on sufferance man's,  
(Who is thy Conqueror evermore through Me)  
A Vagabond henceforth, thy further crimes  
To be avengèd further, doom on doom,  
In the last Judgment Day, when this great book  
Is fillèd with thy history on earth,  
And Hell's sealed gates shall hold thee evermore.  
Nor art thou longer King in Hell: thy throne  
Divided is; the curse thou broughtst on men  
Falls on its Author multiplied. Henceforth  
Shall revolution desolate thy realm—  
In works of sin united heretofore—  
Thy hand 'gainst every one's, and every one's  
'Gainst thine, and 'gainst the others, till thou sink  
Into a slave, and all be slaves with thee,  
And learn that variance with God must grow  
To mutual disgust and discord dire,  
And evil compacts in confusion end.'  
So saying, He laid hand upon the crown  
Which, since Gethsemane's disastrous night,  
Had tottered, like a ruin on a waste,

Upon his forehead wan and desolate ;  
He took it from that wilderness of brow —  
That region of ubiquitous despair —  
And cast it like a millstone in the depths,  
And said : ' Thus sink thy kingdom and thy pride.'

Then through the deeps His car triumphant sped ;  
They followed at its wheels ; their dreadful fear  
Enchained them, other bond they needed none ;  
Through the extent illimitable He  
The captives led ; their prisoners saw them made  
An open show, and from afar the saints  
In Abraham's bosom saw, and said with joy,  
' The hour of our redemption draweth nigh.'  
And as He passed the gates He took the keys,  
And carried them in triumph o'er the gulf.  
Nor did release the prisoners ; but o'er  
The abyss, a tortuous bulk suspended them.  
But when He reached the Paradisal shores  
Their bands He loosèd, and they backward reeled,  
As when some city set upon a hill,  
Unseated by the earthquake, tower on tower,  
Temple on temple, tumbles headlong down,  
A broken, undistinguishable mass.

Meanwhile His sacred body had been laid  
In its pure sepulchre ; for when they knew  
Their Master dead, two secret followers stole  
Out of the shade ; the one to Pilate went



And begged His burial, and the other came  
With myrrh and aloes, and they twain took down  
The Burden from the cross, and reverently  
Wrapt it in linen fine and spices sweet,  
And bound His drooping head. Then with soft breath,  
And solemn steps and slow, bore their sad load  
To the near tomb—the women following  
Who served Him living and adored Him dead.  
No hired mourners there, nor boisterous wails  
To break the mournful reverence of love  
With vulgar ostentatiousness of woe.  
It was a simple funeral, humbler far  
Than any cottager's, but in sweet chime  
With the whole tenor of His heart and life,  
Who saw in widow's mite a priceless gift,  
And doubtless would accept a woman's tears  
As the best homage at His funeral.  
The slanting sun fell like the kiss of Heaven  
Upon Him as they reached the grave; and when  
They laid Him on His rocky bed, the sun  
Sank down, and the great Sabbath stillness came.  
And in the evening's holy cool and calm  
They left Him to His rest and went to theirs.

## BOOK VII.

## ARGUMENT.

PARADISE, the place of departed souls before the coming of Christ — Gentiles as well as Jews were there—The Redeemer is discovered coming across the separating gulf—Their jubilation at His arrival—Their welcome—He preaches to them the good tidings—Declares the great enemy vanquished, and directs them to the verge of the Paradisal cliffs, from whence they shall obtain a view of the great destruction of his kingdom, which, to make the judgment of God more terrible, is accomplished by the fiends themselves—Sunrise upon the hills of Paradise—The song of the saints—The Saviour selects a band of spirits to accompany Him in His resurrection—He reveals to the captive saints the greater glory that awaits them at His ascension—He descends to the earth, where the night still lingers—His resurrection from the dead and appearance to Mary Magdalene—Two angels sit in the empty sepulchre—Their discourse—The Saviour summons up the vision of Death, and changes him into a ministering angel—The souls from Paradise, headed by the Lord, go to the sepulchres, and at the voice of the Son of God entering into their bodies they come forth clothed—They go into the Holy City, some to terrify, others to console, the Jews—They vanish away, and join the Master in a place obscure—A brief summary of the Lord's appearances to His disciples—When absent from them this risen company entertain Him in secret.

## BOOK VII.

**T**HERE was a Realm of Glory, bordering  
On Heaven, called Paradise : a place it was  
Most like to Paradise, so therefore named ;  
Where heavenly trees did fruit, and flowers did bloom,  
And beings heavenly walked, and tranquil reigned,  
And curse was not, nor strife, nor pain, nor tears ;  
And yet it was not Heaven, as Paradise,  
Where our first parents dwelt, was not, though it  
Reflected Heaven in beauty and in bliss,  
As the blue lake reflects the bluer skies.

Here Adam dwelt and Eve, by angels borne  
To its new bliss, when the forbidden tree  
Had brought forth death ; and with them all their seed  
Who had believed the promise, and embraced  
The joys to come ; Abel, whose gentle life  
Had whispered down the ages ; Enoch fair,  
Who walked with God, and one day disappeared,  
So high he climbed the everlasting road ;  
And Noah, preacher of the wrath to come  
To the old world ; and Abraham, God's friend,  
Whose patriarchal bosom was the rest  
Of all the holy dead. But who shall tell

Their names or numbers who, assembled there,  
Awaited the Redeemer, whose far day  
They saw rejoicing in the womb of Time,  
And saw with joy unspeakable, and full  
Of glory in the fulness of the times;  
And Moses and Elias sent in name  
Of the whole sainted company, to hail  
Their Lord, and information fuller seek  
Of His decease, its manner and its end,  
To be accomplished at Jerusalem?

Nor were there wanting Gentiles in that throng  
Of spirits blest—souls that, like Job, had fought  
Through all the sea and cloud of human thought,  
On to that calm, clear land of faith: 'I know  
That my Redeemer liveth.' Job no Jew,  
But an Arabian chief, whose scriptures were  
Those desert rocks, whereon he longed to grave  
The creed which from their tablets he had learnt  
In many a rude inscription by the wind  
And rain, the earthquake and the stormy fire—  
God's chroniclers in Nature's ancient Book—  
And said: 'Oh, that my words were written now!  
That they were printed in a book, and graved  
Upon the rock for ever: for I know  
He lives who is my Goel, and shall stand  
In latter days upon the earth, and though  
Worms shall destroy this body, in my flesh  
I shall see God.' And many such there were—

Interpreters of Nature's face, inspired —  
The face whose silence is diviner far  
Than speech of men, nor can translated be  
Save by those touched with supernatural fire.

Such were those students of the stars,\* who read  
The Evangel upon the scroll of Heaven:  
Seekers of light, and reverent worshippers  
Of the great Beauty which they distantly  
Beheld, and longed to see in clearer light  
And nearer view, and gladly would have lost  
Their starlight wisdom in the Day of Truth,  
And risen from Nature's worshippers to priests  
Of an Incarnate God. And many souls  
Worshipped far off the King Invisible,  
And for the day of His appearing watched;  
And, by the love which greater is than creeds,  
Were gathered to the breast of Abraham,  
His spiritual seed. They, like the little ships†  
Upon the lake, when Jesus stilled the storm,  
Sailing the world's wide sea, were never found  
Within the Church, among the chosen band,  
Yet compassed were by His vast love and care,  
The Presence that is greater than the Ship;  
In other ships, but in those ships with Him,  
Their Guide the Saviour, though they knew Him not,

\* 'There came wise men from the East to Jerusalem.'—  
*Matt.* ii. 1.

† 'And there were with Him other little ships.'—*Mark*, iv. 36.

Knew only this, that life was one long storm  
Of doubt and fear, and that at last there came  
A wondrous calm, and found themselves at land.  
They knew that it was Paradise, and said,  
'It was the Lord that led us,' while they fell  
Upon their faces, and did worship Him.

'It is the Lord!' said all in whispers glad,  
Now, as they saw the Voyager Sublime,  
Ascending the unnavigable gulf;  
'It is the Lord!' they said, and rent the heavens  
With jubilant shout, as they beheld the Mighty One  
Travelling in His great strength, arrive. He said,  
'All hail!' and breathed upon them, while new life  
And loftier thoughts inspired them, and so long  
At rest in Abraham's bosom, they aspired  
To nobler rest—the bosom of the Lord.

Forth came the spirits eminent, and each  
Obeisance reverent made. Adam came first  
And Eve: her hand in his, as when of old  
He led her to the flowery altar, where  
At morn and eve they worshipped in the cool,  
And thus they lowly spake: 'Hail, Son of God  
And Seed of Woman! born to bruise the head  
Of the old serpent, and the Tree of Life  
To give our ruined race. We see in Thee  
The Being who the walks of Paradise  
Did daily light at sundown; and when sin

Had changed the world to us, us to ourselves,  
Did hide us from the cold and from our shame  
With skins of beasts; symbols of better dress  
Clothing our spirits in their nakedness,  
That they might walk with God in penitence  
Who could no longer walk in purity.  
Thy Face it was that lit the faded world  
When all the light of earth and skies was gone.'  
And thus spake Abel, following in their steps  
And bowing near them: 'Lo! I saw Thee stand  
Amidst the opened heavens what time the lamb  
Was smoking on the altar. As a Lamb  
Which had been slain Thou seemedst, and I fell  
A martyr for the Sacrifice I saw.'  
Next Enoch: 'Lo! I walked with Thee as one  
Who travels in an unfrequented road,  
Alone with God, and lone in godliness;  
'Tis the same Face that charmed my toiling feet  
Along that rough and solitary way.'  
Then Noah: 'Lo! Thine is the face I saw  
Encircled by the cloud-bow when it shone,  
With grace returning, on the silent waste  
And wreck of the dead world, and, 'mid its smile,  
Wept o'er the scene a rain of pitying tears.'  
And Abraham thus: 'I recognise in Thee  
The Traveller who to Mamre came, and deigned  
To accept such humble fare as tents afford,  
And pilgrims give to pilgrims. Unawares  
I entertained Thee, nor knew my Guest



Until Thou didst repay the scanty cheer  
With grant far-reaching — gift in gift contained —  
A Canaan for my children ; but for me  
A better country, incorruptible  
And undefiled, in heavenly places kept  
Against the glorious appearing-day  
Of the great God my Saviour, which afar  
I saw, exulting in the blessed hope  
Of a continuing inheritance ;  
My only portion in the earthly rest,  
The common heritage of all — a grave.'  
And Jacob thus : ' Thou art the Man with whom  
I wrestled till the breaking of the day,  
The nameless One, who named me Israel,  
And strengthened me Himself to overcome ;  
And the supplanter changed into a prince,  
Meanest to noblest, worthy to confer  
His name upon a race of priests and kings.'  
And Moses thus : ' Thou art the Judge Supreme  
Omnipotent ! I saw Thee on the mount,  
Upon whose hoary summit Thou cam'st down  
On twice ten thousand cherubs as on wheels  
Of chariots innumerable upborne ;  
The trumpet blast before Thee, and behind  
Thy robes of judgment, like the thunder clouds,  
Darkening the camp, and round about Thy seat  
The seraphs blazing, like a thousand worlds  
In whole burnt-offerings, self-consumed of zeal.'  
And thus the Saved of every land and tongue,

A host that none could number : ' Ne'er saw we  
Thy Face adorable except in dreams ;  
But they were dreams God-sent ; voices that fell  
From angels on their watch-towers in the night,  
Saying to them that sat in darkness gross,  
" The morning cometh." Holy Light, all hail !  
Night comes no more. The True Light shineth now,  
And Thou art brighter than our brightest dreams.'

He heard and answered graciously : ' I am  
All that hath been or that shall ever be ;  
The Alpha and the Omega. The Star  
Of the world's morning and its risen Sun,  
And the unsetting Light of worlds beyond,  
Who was and is and is to be ; to-day  
And yesterday and evermore the same.  
The Word of God not less of Law than Grace,  
The various Revelation of His Name,  
Who is one God ; though shown to men in parts  
Because of the infirmity of flesh —  
At sundry times in divers manners shown  
To patriarchs and prophets ; till I came  
No more in semblant, but substantial, man.  
God otherwise ne'er manifest, or known.  
By Me He made the worlds. By Me He gave  
His law and ordinance and promises.  
For it hath pleased the Father that in Me  
All Fulness should abide, and naught exist  
Save in relation to my work complete —

All things My symbols in the heavens and earth—  
All things My shadows in the Sanctuary—  
My work the end of all the works of God,  
Their centre and circumference and crown,  
In all things having the pre-eminence.  
Fulfilled are prophecies, embodied types  
Finished the Temple service. Offering  
And Priest and Holy and Most Holy Place,  
No more significant—their task is done.  
The earthen vessel waxeth old which long  
Hath held the sacred treasure and must now  
Be broken, like the alabaster box,  
Upon My feet. The savour of My name,  
Like ointment poured forth, shall fill the world ;  
And men shall come to Me from north and south,  
And in My kingdom sit with Abraham,  
Isaac, and Jacob ; strangers nevermore,  
Nor foreigners, but fellow-citizens  
And of God's family. For Moses was  
A faithful servant in his house, and gave  
As God directed him ; but I am Son  
Over My own ; and everywhere I send  
The mighty proclamation, " Ho ! all ye  
Who thirst and have no money, milk and wine  
Buy without money ; and the priceless bread  
Take without price." I am that Bread of Life.  
And He who built the house breaks down the wall  
Of its partition, and a feast prepares  
Unto all people : and His messengers

Sends forth into the wilderness to bid  
The poor and needy come His House to fill—  
Rich entertainment for the hungry ! Robes  
Of spotless white for all the naked ! Wine  
Of heavenly vintage for the perishing !  
And ointment for the blind ! and for the sick  
Immortal health ! and peace unspeakable  
For all—the unknown peace of God. Through Me  
Given heretofore ; but more abundantly  
Given with the Holy Ghost, whom now I send  
In plenitude of grace exceeding all  
That holy men of old and prophets knew.  
For God hath given the Spirit unto Me  
Immeasurably ; that in sweet recompense  
For My soul's travail I might give to men  
Unwonted baptism—<sup>1</sup>gifts and grace Divine.  
For having by Myself purged all their sins,  
I yield no more to Death's dominion ; but  
To Him who raised Me up and quickened Me  
I do ascend ; even where I was before,  
To sit down on the right hand glorious  
Of the Eternal Majesty on high ;  
And with Me all who fell asleep in faith,  
And have been waiting for Me in this place  
Of bliss imperfect—prisoners of hope !  
Now blessed are your eyes, for ye behold  
The King in all His beauty and shall see  
The land that is far off ! And though to some  
I gave nor priest, nor oracle, nor type,

But only the things made, wherein are seen  
My glorious power and Godhead ; yet your hearts,  
Honest and good, searched out and traced by these,  
The things invisible, and brought forth fruit  
Of righteous conversation ; and to such  
As order their converse aright, God saith  
He *will* show His salvation; for with Him  
Is no respect of persons, but all men,  
In every nation, that Him fear, and live  
In righteousness accepted are of *Him*.  
Now is the Gospel preached to you, restrained  
From sight of God as spirits held in prison.  
The Spirit hath anointed Me to preach  
Deliverance to the captives, to unloose  
The prisoners, to open the blind eyes,  
And say to all, “ Behold your God. ” I am  
The express image of His Person bright,  
Whom none hath seen, nor can see evermore :  
Dwelling in light, to which approach can none,  
Save He who in His bosom is, and comes  
Declaring Him to all in earth and Heaven :  
The fulness of the Godhead bodily  
In Me abiding ; I the Father’s House,  
The Temple of the New Jerusalem,  
In Whom all worship, and in Whom all see  
The glory of the Father, filling Me  
As once it filled the house of Solomon.  
The temple of My Body for a while  
Lies in the dust ; but I go hence to raise

The consecrated house, and stablish it  
Above the heavenly mountain-tops sublime ;  
The nations shall flow to it, and the kings  
Shall bring their glory to it, and all heavens,  
In reconcilment sweet and worship pure,  
Shall dwell in love—in God eternally.  
Nor less the Conqueror of man's foe, and God's,  
And angels', and all creatures' ; vanquishing  
The adversary who has sown dispeace  
Between the Father and His children, and  
The children's concord broken, and all things  
Involved in anguish and tumultuousness :  
The principalities and powers of Hell  
I spoiled upon the Cross, and following them  
To their dark hiding-place, I brought them forth,  
And through their wide dominion made a show  
Of My completed triumph. Ye beheld  
The spectacle across the bridgeless gulf ;  
To them increased vexation, when they saw,  
Crowning these summits unapproachable,  
Your shining faces. The long, tortuous train  
Dragging like wounded serpent through the deep,  
Writhing in mortal agony, ye watched,  
Rejoicing (chiefly Eve) that God had bruised  
The Serpent 'neath your feet. My Conquest works  
More evil 'mong them yet, and even now  
Behold the worse beginning.'

To the verge

They went with gladsome awe, and looking down,

They saw the Hosts of Darkness 'gainst their Prince  
Gathering like tempest-clouds. They had abjured  
All their allegiance now. None would renew  
His confidence in him, whose leadership  
Had so disastrous proved. Against the brow  
Of the black storm firm as a hill he stood,  
And judged himself a more than equal match  
For all their insurrectionary wrath—  
Himself the aggregation, and the whole  
Of all the forms and powers of wickedness—  
And had withstood them. But the Judgment Blast  
Bore them along, and made them instruments  
Of the great wrath of God, who, e'en for doom,  
Disdains not fitting means, and makes His foes  
The executors of His righteous wrath  
Upon themselves—evil its own just foe—  
And own destroyer always, everywhere.  
Onwards they came—deluge of devils; and,  
Amidst the overwhelming of their rage,  
The mighty Thunder burst. Satan the flame  
Inimitable knew: and as a tower,  
Shot by the fatal bolt, so he fell swift  
Into the sulphurous flood, and o'er him prone  
The thunder-clouds drave hurrying. On them swept  
The fiends, nor saw the Flash, with fury blind;  
Nor heard the roaring of the Judgment Blast  
Amid the sword-like rattling of their wings,  
But judged the mighty overthrow the work  
Of their victorious arm. Then, of their power

Grown confident, against each other straight  
They turned their force, and for the sovereignty  
Each with the other warred, seeking to gain  
The vacant Hill — the seat of Empery  
Ere Palace capped it. Fierce the rivals fought,  
Like vultures o'er a carcase; but, like them,  
They did but rend the prize they coveted  
Into a thousand fragments, till remained  
Naught to contend for; for the mountain-throne  
Was buried in the lake. Then furious  
With rage of disappointment and revenge,  
They strove, but could not quench their enmity  
In mutual destruction, destined still  
To live, though with exterminating hate  
Inflamed. Appalling sight! they rooted up  
The burning mountains, and the frozen hills  
Hurled thundering; and the mighty islands tore  
Out of Hell's bowels, and high, dripping fire,  
They lifted them and sunk them in the flood;  
And, armed with whirlwinds, others chased the rocks,  
And ground them into powder. Quivered some  
With lightnings came, and burden huge of hail;  
Each stone was like a crag, and every tower  
Was swept before the torrent of the storm.  
Nor stayed the madness of their rage until,  
Hell disembowelled and her empire left  
A carcase on which Desolation sat  
And flapped her plumeless wings, they all around,  
Like violent billows when the storm is blown,



Sank down exhausted in a level sea,  
Of equal power and equal impotence.

'Twas the dim dawn when the great Hero came,  
Even as afterwards, upon the shore  
Of the Tiberias' sea he did appear  
To the disciples, going before the Day.  
And now the Morning spread her ensigns forth  
The King of Day to herald ; through the gates  
Of orient pearl he came, and on the sea  
His vesture lay in many a league of gold :  
The silver-vested stars—Night's modest train—  
Retired as he advanced, and bore their lamps  
Into their nether hall. Over the hills  
He walked benign and crowned them as he passed  
In royal silence, and he seemed to exult  
In his dominions more than when the dew  
Of the young world like incense rose, exhaled  
By his first smile, as on his throne of sky  
God set him, saying, ' Rule the day and lend  
Yon moon a sceptre for the night.' The heaven  
Looked like a canopy, new-dyed to grace  
A splendid celebration : e'en the birds  
Were conscious of a freshness in the scene  
And sang their sweetest. 'Twas the world's birth-day,  
The New Creation's morn,—the second birth  
Of Nature—first day of the week of years,  
Whose close will be the everlasting rest,  
The Sabbath of eternity. All souls

In Paradise the exhilaration felt,  
And sang with gladness insuppressible,  
'This is the day the Lord hath made : in it  
We will rejoice ; will show ourselves right glad  
Before Him with a song ; for He the Lord  
Our Maker is and we His people are,  
The people of His pasture, and the sheep  
Of His right hand. To-day we hear His voice,  
And we go after Him with joy ; for He  
Will guide us to His Habitation high.  
Of old He promised His people rest,  
And "into my rest they shall enter" said ;  
But Joshua gave them not that rest. Again  
He spake of it by David, though so long  
A time had passed between : but still that rest  
Remained unfound. But now the Son proclaims,  
And leads us to it. He our Shepherd is :  
He guides us like a flock ; to living streams  
And pastures new, He brings us in His strength.  
Our Joshua He— He bids us enter in  
And find the rest remaining for His saints,  
Which only can be found in God Himself :  
The way revealed alone by His dear Son.  
Lead on, Thou Shepherd of Thy people, lead !  
Thy ransomed shall return with Thee with songs  
Of everlasting joy upon their heads ;  
On Thine the crown of everlasting praise.'

They ended, and He drew a band of souls

From out their number, saying, ' These I choose  
To adorn My resurrection ; and to be  
The earnest of emancipation full  
That waits for you ; when in My risen flesh,  
I shall ascend on high and captive lead  
Captivity. My Father's House above  
Hath many mansions : and superior place  
Will I appoint to you. A few days hence,  
And through these Paradisal realms I pass  
To My celestial residence and throne ;  
All ye shall fall into My kingly train  
And rise, as My ascending chariot rolls,  
To seats of loftier eminence and bliss ;  
For ye have been as those who rest in dreams,  
Consciously blest, but not alive to all  
The energies of an immortal state.  
Now shall ye enter on the higher rest  
Of holy service—ministers of Mine  
To do My pleasure—all joint heirs with Me  
In the inheritance of God's great life  
Of ceaseless work, inviolate repose.  
Complete your rest when perfected your powers,  
At the last resurrection of the just :  
A spiritual body, like to Mine,  
Shall each receive ; a fitting instrument  
For spiritual service in that world,  
Where flesh and blood have no inheritance,  
But all is spiritual evermore.  
Thus, by degrees, doth each the state attain

Of God's pure angels. First, a living soul,  
A natural body, in a natural world ;  
Marrying, in marriage giving, taken up  
With natural pleasures, natural pursuits ;  
Delivered then from flesh corrupt, to dwell  
In this fair mansion, where no worldly cares,  
Or lusts of flesh and blood, could interrupt  
Your sweet tranquillity and rest of soul ;  
By prayer and contemplation, and the glow  
Of spiritual joy, to be made meet  
For the inheritance of saints in light—  
That life, divinely incorrupt and pure,  
Where spirit finds its element and home.  
Each in its order comes ; the natural first,  
The spiritual afterwards : a life  
Of flesh no more, but of the spirit all ;  
And sense consumed, and soul absorbed and lost  
In the immortal flame of Life Divine.  
All else shall perish ; prophecies shall fail,  
And tongues shall cease, and knowledge disappear :  
Only the spiritual abide ; the Faith  
That builds on God, the Hope that sees the towers  
Rising for ever towards the Infinite ;  
And Love that dedicates them as they soar  
To Him who is their Corner-stone and Crown.'

The night still lingered on the *lower* world,  
And passing swiftly by the Morning Star,  
That on the lonely ramparts of the sky

Stood sentinel, the kingly Hero swept,  
With all His train to earth ; His chariot-wheels  
The air tore like a whirlwind, and the ground  
Rent like an earthquake ; and the shuddering wind  
The cedars strained, and every hill was crowned  
With fire. The sudden blaze, the sudden blast,  
Startled the keepers of the Sepulchre ;  
Their warlike courage quenched, the rosy warmth  
Fled from their cheeks, they reeled and fell as dead.  
For, 'mid the wildering light and noise, from heaven  
An angel flashed, and from the cave's dark mouth  
Rolled back the stone, and mounted it sole guard ;  
His face like lightning and his robe like snow,  
Striking the keepers blind, freezing their blood ;  
Their weapons dropped, clashing upon the rocks  
The terror reft of human utterance.  
While from the prison grave the Conqueror stepped  
Like bridegroom from his chamber, or the sun  
Out of his tabernacle in the east ;  
And like the benediction of the morn,  
Falling upon the meek and modest flowers,  
That drooped their tearful eyes beside the tomb,  
He lit on Mary Magdalene, who came  
Before the daybreak to the grave to watch  
And weep beside her Dead : her dewy eyes  
Greeted the risen Sun and healing found.

And in the Sepulchre two Angels sat :  
One at the head, the other at the feet,

Where Jesus' body had its Sabbath kept.  
And thus discoursed together as they watched :  
' Here is no sickly odour such as graves  
Breathe on the living; for it could not be  
That He should see corruption, whose pure flesh  
Was fashioned by the overshadowing  
Of the Eternal Spirit. Spices none  
Were needed to embalm His precious clay,  
Preserved by its own purity, and laid,  
Like bundle sweet of myrrh in earth's vile dust,  
To perfume every chamber of the dead.  
Henceforth the grave is but an odorous couch,  
Death but a sleep to those who die in Him ;  
The cross is near the grave ;\* who fall asleep  
Gazing on it rest underneath its shade,  
Captives to Him who hath made captive death,  
Bound in the gentle fetters of His peace,  
And covered by His cross as with a shield,  
For so He giveth His beloved sleep.  
To sin they die no more—its debt is paid.  
They die to Him who hath to sin once died,  
And hath revived to be the Lord of death  
And of the dead, that all might live to Him.  
Shadow of Life is death—shadow of God ;  
Night for His saints to sleep in till they wake  
And see the Face whose Shadow gave them rest,  
Sleeping or waking they are still with Him.

\* ' In the place where He was crucified there was a garden.'

He changeth death, the wages once of sin,  
Into the gift of God to all His saints.  
Now blessed are His sleepers from henceforth.  
For he, ere while the earth's last enemy,  
Is the first friend that Heaven sends forth to greet  
The dying saint. The King of Terrors once  
The Saviour's Angel, now—his ghastly face  
Fair with the dawn of Heaven—his grave-deep eyes  
Beaming like stars in life's fast-falling night,  
And in his hand instead of piercing dart  
Bringing a crown of Immortality,  
And pointing to that day when saints reclathed  
And rising from the sepulchre, shall sing  
In honour of the overshadowing Cross—  
More sweetly sing than unclothed spirit can—  
He washed our robes and made them white.'

And thus

The other answering spake : ' Let us rejoice  
That never more He bows to bands of death,  
Or Hell's malignity, or power of man ;  
One conflict sharp and terrible He fought,  
But reigns henceforth in everlasting peace.  
They shall make war with Him, but He 'gainst them  
No more goes forth ; but on His Throne shall sit,  
In the blest Sabbath of His victory,  
And see them made His footstool, overcome  
By sight of His Omnipotent repose.  
For He is King of kings and Lord of lords.  
All things are now put under Him, the World,

And Sin, and Hell, and present things, and things  
To come; and Death, last enemy, He sends  
A mighty messenger before His face  
Filling the world with glory terrible,  
Yet saying, "I must decrease, He who comes  
Behind me must increase;" for He doth fill  
The heaven and earth with His eternity;  
Mortality shall swallowed be in life,  
And death be lost in Christ, and God be all.'

Nor were these words mere musings, but called up  
By what they saw and heard; for near at hand  
The Master stood, and summoning the Shade  
Had changed him by His new gained power of death  
Into the Angel they had spoken of.  
Over the Skeleton they saw the plumes  
Gather in downy gold; they saw him cast  
His diadem at Jesus' feet; and heard  
The mighty captive say, 'Redeemed by Thee  
From him that had the power of death, I come  
To serve Thee, Lord, through Thine! and when the last  
Of Thy redeemed ones I have laid at rest  
In Thy blest bosom, I will glad be slain  
By Thee, O King of Immortality!  
And sink into the nothingness from whence  
I came, that Thou mayst all things fill  
With Thine unshadowed splendour.'

From a hill

The fallen Enemy beheld the scene—



Saw the grave burst; the keepers fall; the Son  
Cast off the bands of Death, and Death the while  
Put on the radiant livery of Heaven—  
Redeemed, like man, from Satan's servitude,  
And changed into the likeness of the Lord,  
According to the mighty power whereby  
He all things doth subdue unto Himself.  
The sight he could not long endure, but stole,  
Lonely and sad, into the realms of Air  
Far from the scene of triumph; but he found  
No region where that triumph had not left  
Its everlasting record—the whole world—  
Nay, the whole universe—its monument.  
So that from its ubiquitous results  
The Evil One was forced to feel he fled  
In vain. Should he invoke the morning's wings  
To bear him to the outermost of worlds,  
The dreadful fact would start before him there;  
Should he ascend into the heaven, 'twas there;  
Or make his bed in hell, 'twas there. The hills  
And mountains could not hide him from the sight,  
For they had rent their skirts of adamant  
Around the Sufferer's Cross—that Cross appeared,  
In taunting lustre, blazoned everywhere,  
And all things, glorified by its new light,  
Proclaimed the Tempter's infinite disgrace.  
He knew not where to go, nor where to cast  
His irritated gaze. Alone he stood,  
With countenance dejected, and his head

Crownless and bare, while beat the unsubject wind  
Upon his altered form, as the keen blast  
Assaults the beggar, when repulsed he turns  
From mansion door to plod the open waste;  
And, as he bent beneath the angry sky,  
He seemed to hear in every shrieking blast :  
'How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer!  
Son of the morning! Brightest of the stars!'

Nobles have knocked for alms at doors which once  
Opened spontaneously to own them lord;  
And kings have shivered at their palace gates,  
The heads on straw which once sustained a crown,  
So swiftly doth the wheel of life revolve  
From royalty to rags. Thus Satan stood,  
A vagabond amidst the scene which once  
Owned him as king, but knew him now no more.

Across the garden, like a morning mist,  
Glided the spectre host. The Lord before  
Went, like the Captain of a chosen band.  
Into each grave He marched; the ponderous stones,  
On which the dust of centuries had set  
Its thousand seals, were riven, burst when He  
Had cried in His expiring agony.  
The silent city of the dead then shook,  
And all its sleepers stirred. Since then, unclosed,  
The sepulchres had gazed, with wonder struck,  
Upon the astonished sun; the prying winds

Among the dry bones gossiped, muttering  
Their wizard incantations, as they moved  
Mysteriously above the shuddering dust,  
And whispering, in strange and broken sounds,  
Predictions of a more mysterious breath  
Travelling from Heaven, which through the hollow vaults,  
Sweeping like trumpet blast, now cried: 'Come forth !'  
Calling the sleepers by their names. They heard  
The Son of God, came forth ; pledge of that day  
When the same Voice shall peal through every grave,  
And mortal seed, in flower immortal raised,  
Shall crown the earth with the rich bloom of Heaven —  
A beauty fadeless as the Face of God.

Through the cold spiritual light of dawn  
They marched—a spiritual host—and stole  
Into the holy city. Like a cloud  
Along a mountain creeping, so they wound  
Their noiseless course around the City wall ;  
Then, parting with a sign, took different ways —  
These like a moonbeam through the windows passed,  
And stood beside the waking sleepers pale —  
In Pilate's chamber, and in Herod's stood,  
And by the bed of many, on whose souls  
The Innocent Blood was found, and on them fixed  
A doom-portending gaze ; and other some  
Entered the temple courts, and darkly moved  
Like shadows, muttering through the early gloom,  
'Your house is henceforth desolate !' The priests

Heard the strange voices whispering round the walls,  
And saw, in dim distinctness, the pale forms  
Pass to and fro like ghosts disquieted.

On different mission others went—appeared  
To souls that for redemption looked among  
The Jews; who had not joined in the foul deed,  
And trembling were between their hopes and fears.  
They burst into their chambers, as the sun  
Streams through the lattice; and with radiant face,  
Their risen bodies witnessing the while,  
They cried: ‘The Lord is risen from the dead,  
First-fruits of them that slept in dust—the dead  
First preachers are; their feet first beautiful  
Upon the mountains of Jerusalem,  
Bringing good news, salvation publishing,  
Proclaiming peace, to Zion saying, “Lo!  
Thy God doth reign.” The risen dead first tell  
Of Jesus and the Resurrection hope.’

Their errand done, they vanished out of sight,  
And joined the Master in a place obscure.  
Appeared no more, but He whom they had preached  
Unto the Jews, His followers visited.  
(Unto the Jews He went not, their own dead  
Them warned and comforted, and to the voice  
Of Moses and the prophets added theirs.  
And they who heard the prophets heard the dead,  
And they who heard them not were not convinced

By Heaven's infallible ambassadors  
Clothed in the garments of eternity.)  
Jesus went to His own ; at sundry times,  
In divers manners, making Himself known,  
And by proofs many and infallible  
Showing Himself alive, withal the same ;  
To Mary by His olden tenderness ;  
To Peter by His all-forgiving love ;  
To Thomas by His condescending grace ;  
To John by His discriminating choice ;  
To two of them in breaking of the bread ;  
To the eleven when the doors were shut ;  
And to five hundred followers at once ;  
Showing His piercèd hands, and feet, and side ;  
Blessing and comforting, and promising  
Another Comforter ; them building up  
By human acts, as well by acts divine ;  
Eating before them ; working miracle,  
And giving them to eat ; and afterwards  
Giving them better good — Divine repast,  
Instruction, admonition, and reproof ;  
Their understandings opening, and new light  
Throwing on God's words, and His own ; their work  
For all the future indicating, and  
His great commission giving, with His strength  
For its fulfilment ; — all support contained  
In the capacious promise, — ' Lo ! with you  
I alway am, until the world shall end.'  
Thus forty days He visited the earth,

At chosen intervals. The saints who rose  
To deck His triumph, entertained, with song  
And holy converse, their Immortal Lord  
When absent from the saints on earth. Retired  
From sight of men, they waited with glad hope  
Till the Ascension morning should arrive  
To crown their Saviour, and complete their joy.

## ARGUMENT.

CHRIST leads His disciples to Bethany, and after blessing them is parted from them—Their sorrow—The Angels appear to them—Their immediate joy—They return—The previous preparations for His ascension which had been made in Heaven—The morning having arrived the golden ladder is let down—As He begins to rise the heavens open, and the angels descend upon Him—They ascend with Him, singing His triumphs—He passes through the depths of space—The saints in Paradise behold Him coming—Their song—He enters—They fall into His train, and He leads captivity captive—His progress through the various heavens—Their song—The song of the prophets, and other ministers of His Church—The angels on the walls of Heaven behold Him—They cast their challenge—His reply, which the angels attendant set to music—Another challenge—Another response—He reaches the gates—They are invoked in song—They open—He enters—His saints follow after Him—The welcome of the angels around the Throne—Messiah's chariot—Great jubilation as He proceeds to the Throne—His homage to His Father and song of thanksgiving—The Father's welcome—The exultations of the angels at His enthronement—The visible symbol of the Divine glory is superseded by the vision of His face—The cloud that had hung before the Shekinah becomes a rainbow around His head—The Angels delight at their first sight of a Person on the Throne—The song of the redeemed—The Son presents them to the Father—The Father accepts them, and further rewards the Divine Son by putting all things into His hands, crowning Him with many crowns—The Angels renew their homage, and look forward with glad anticipation to the end of the wondrous mystery of Redemption.

## BOOK VIII.

HE led them out to Bethany ; his heart  
Remembering last earth's friendship, not its hate—  
His last act benediction. Lifting up  
His hands He blessed them, and while blessing them  
Was parted from them ; and His benison,  
Dying in the blue distance as He rose,  
Was gathered to the bosom of the heavens,  
To be distilled, like the gentle rain,  
Upon the earth for ever. The deep clouds  
Received Him out of sight—the darkest clouds  
To eye of sense that ever hid the sun ;  
But, like a shower that follows lengthened drought,  
They broke on the disciples' sorrowing hearts  
In floods of heavenly joy.

Fixed to the spot  
They stood, with steadfast gaze upon those clouds,  
Half chiding, half imploring, fain to win  
Another glimpse of the ascending Lord,  
Whom losing, they first found had all their love.  
But mourning love looks into vacant skies ;  
For Heaven gives back none whom it has received,  
Master, or friend, or brother, or the Lord,  
Until the restitution at the last.



Wherefore two Angels came without the gate  
And said : ' Ye men of Galilee, stand not  
Thus gazing into Heaven ; He who is gone  
Shall in like manner come to earth again.'  
Submissively they bowed and worshippèd ;  
Then homeward bent their lone, though joyful steps  
And every spot round which His memory clung  
Transfigured seemed ; no more remembering  
His sorrow in their unexpected joy,  
The Garden, Pavement, Cross, and Sepulchre  
Became their Master's Royal Road to Heaven.

For forty days had Heaven adorned herself  
To meet her King returning. Seraph-bards  
Who had from immemorial ages sung  
The wondrous eras in Heaven's history  
Had each prepared a song : each song rehearsed  
A different act : they all a circle formed —  
A crown of praise sublime. Some sang His Love,  
And some His Grief ; and some His blessed Life :  
And some His triumph over Death and Hell ;  
Until His work was celebrated all.  
In epic some, and some in lyric sang,  
With lofty harmony which earthly bards  
Hearing, confess their hymnings most inspired  
The feeble lisplings of an infant's thought.

And Angels crowns of amaranthine bloom  
Wove in their odorous bowers : and cherubs plucked

Immortal blossoms in His path to strew ;  
And some festooned the pearly gates, and spanned  
The way with rainbows. Others from the mines  
Quarried all kinds of precious stones, beryl  
And topaz, jacinth, jasper, emerald,  
Ruby and diamond ; and monuments  
Erected in the golden streets. And gold  
Some into banners spread, and wrought thereon  
His thousand titles, names both old and new ;  
Those to the Angels sacred, as well those  
Most precious unto men : — The Son of God ;  
First-born of every creature ; Word of God ;  
The Woman's Seed ; The Seed of Abraham ;  
The Angel of the Covenant ; I AM ;  
Shepherd of Israel ; David's Son and Lord ;  
Child born, Son given ; Bright and Morning Star ;  
The Sun of Righteousness ; The Word made flesh ;  
Son of the Highest ; Christ, and Saviour ;  
Glory of Israel and Desire of all ;  
Prophet of God ; The Priest ; The spotless Lamb ;  
The First-begotten from the Dead ; First-fruits ;  
Head over all things to the Church ; Head Stone  
Of the whole Temple ; Prince and Judge of all ;  
The Lamb the Temple, and the Lamb the Light ;  
The Glory of the New Jerusalem ;  
A Name above all names, God over all.

At morn the golden ladder was let down  
To Olivet : when He the ascent began

Heaven opened : and the Angels on His head  
Descended ; and ascended as He rose,  
Singing the while, ' Let God arise, and let  
His foes all scattered be ! Ascend, O God,  
Into Thy rest, Thou and Thine ark of strength !  
Sing unto God, sing praises to His Name ;  
To Him that rideth on the heavens ; to God  
Ascribe ye strength ! His strength is in the clouds.'

Beyond the regions of the earthly world  
He quickly passed, and through the depths of space  
He mounted. System after system sank  
Below him, as the mountain-ridges 'neath  
The feet of Moses when he climbed to view  
The Promised Land. And as He rose through each  
Celestial group, stars in their courses danced  
With triumph round Him as they wheeled along,  
Like David 'fore the ark : while all His hosts  
Invoked them in their song : ' Praise Him, ye heavens !  
Praise ye Him in the heights ! O praise Him, Sun  
And Moon ! and praise Him, all ye stars of light !  
For He commanded, and ye all were made,  
And by Him ye consist. For He the stars  
Doth shepherd in His wisdom, calling you  
All by your names, and leading out your flocks ;  
None wandereth in the heavenly fields, though space  
Be infinite, so infinite His might.'

Upon the hills of Paradise the Saints

Watched for His coming, chiding oft the hours,  
And saying, 'Why doth our Belovèd wait?'  
Why tarrieth His chariot so long?'  
At length they sighted Him. The souls elect  
Were with Him, and the thousands numberless  
Of Angels followed Him. The saints their joy  
Uttered aloud: 'The chariots of God  
Are twenty thousand, even thousands are  
Of Angels, and the Lord among them is  
As in Mount Sinai—the holy place.  
O clap your hands, all people! shout with voice  
Of triumph! for the Lord is terrible,  
King over all the earth. He comes to choose  
The inheritance for *us*, and He shall bring  
His people to the palace of the King;  
Our eyes shall see Him in His beauty, and  
The land that is far off.'

And as they ceased  
He entered; and the Angels that before  
Came flying, blew their trumpets loud.  
Then, 'mid the hush profound, asked reverently:  
'Who shall ascend into the hill of God?  
Or who within His holy place shall stand?'  
While those who followed after answered straight;  
'He with clean hands and pure in heart, whose soul  
He hath not lifted up to vanity,  
Nor falsely sworn, but hath wrought righteousness;  
He shall receive the blessing of the Lord,  
And dwell for ever in His holy hill.

This is the generation of His saints  
In every land, who sought the Face of God—  
The God of Jacob—and before Him feared.’  
Then all their voices joined triumphantly :  
‘ God is gone up with shout, the Lord with voice  
Of trumpet. Sing ye praises to His Name.’

His course He stayed not, but ascended swift  
Into all heavens. And in His train His saints  
Went, singing with subdued and trustful voice :  
‘ Our heart is fixed, our glory doth rejoice,  
Also our flesh shall rest in hope ; for Thou  
Wilt show our souls the Path of Life ; with Thee  
Fulness of joy is found, at Thy right hand  
Are pleasures evermore.’

Together then  
Angels and saints with common triumph sang,  
While spread the waves of music manifold,  
Like many waters, to the starry shores :  
‘ Thou hast ascended up on high, and led  
Captive captivity ; Thou hast received  
Gifts for rebellious men, that God, the Lord,  
Might dwell among them.’

As He travelled through  
The many heavens, they recognised the King  
Who bowed them when, His glory emptying,  
He stooped to the estate of mortal clay ;  
And uttered thus their welcome, and their joy  
At His return : ‘ He who descended first

Into the lower parts, the same ascends  
Above all heavens now, all things to fill.'  
While thus, the bards and prophets, priests and seers,  
That in the great procession of His saints  
Marched eminent, chimed in, with blest content :  
' Head over all things to His Church to be !  
And He gave some apostles, prophets some,  
Evangelists and teachers, ere He rose ;  
And goes to send the Father's promise down,  
The Holy Ghost abundantly from Heaven,  
For perfecting of saints, for building up  
His holy Temple, till all men shall come  
Into Faith's unity, a perfect man ;  
The Church, past, present, and to come, one Church !  
The measure of the stature full of Christ.'

The Angels, crowding on the heavenly walls,  
Beheld far off the illustrious Conqueror shine,  
And cast the challenge, in a flood of song :  
' Who cometh thus from Edom dyed in blood ?  
This that is glorious in His raiment ? this  
That travels in the greatness of His strength ?'  
He answered : and the thousands ministering  
To music set His words, and in a blast  
Of joy responsive rolled the quick reply :  
' I that in righteousness do speak, all-strong  
To save.'

Then straight the choral question : ' Why  
Is Thine apparel red ? Thy robe like him

That treadeth in the wine-fat ?'

Swiftly then

The answer—nearer like a thunder-peal  
Which, first heard distantly, breaks overhead  
In the full diapason of the storm—  
'The wine-press I have trodden, and alone ;  
For of the people there was with me none.  
I looked, and there was none to help—wondered  
That none upheld ; therefore Mine own arm brought  
Salvation, and My fury it sustained.  
For in My heart the day of vengeance was,  
The year of My redeemed was come.'

The song

Expired in thunders at the gate of Heaven.  
But midst the dying echoes a new peal  
Smote on the portals with its myriad hands :  
'Lift up your heads, O gates ! and be lift up,  
Ye everlasting doors, and so the King  
Of Glory shall come in !'

Clashed on the gates

A sea of voices, answering from within,  
'Who is this King of Glory ?'

And again,

Like billows 'gainst the cliffs, the impatient joy  
Surged on the rocks of pearl : 'The mighty Lord,  
Victorious in battle ! Lift your heads,  
And let the King of Glory in !'

Again

The opposing blast demanded, fain to raise

A mightier proclamation of His name :

‘ Who is this King of Glory ? Who ? ’

And now,

Tempestuous round Him as the Judgment Blast,

Shaking the everlasting buttresses

All round the heavens, the jubilant response :

‘ The Lord of Hosts the King of Glory is.

Ye everlasting portals, give Him room.’

They straight spread wide, their pearly faces smiled,

And took Him to the bosom deep of bliss.

His saints went after Him, while Angels sang :

‘ Open the gates, that they who keep the truth,

The righteous nation, may come in.’ And they

Took up the glad refrain, and chanted sweet :

‘ Open to us the gates of righteousness,

This gate of God through which the righteous go.’

And as they passed into the city fair,

And saw its streets of gold, its walls of gems,

Its gates of pearl, and seas of diamond,

They sang : ‘ We have a City strong, the Lord

Salvation will appoint for walls. The Stone

Rejected by the Builders is become

The Head Stone of the Corner. ’Tis the Lord

Hath done it, and ’tis marvellous in our eyes.’

While from the Angels round about the Throne

The welcome sounded, like the voice of God :

‘ Blessed be they that in the Lord’s name come,



We bless you out of Zion.'

*At the gate*

His chariot stood—thousand immortal flames !  
Which swept Him to His Throne, while myriads strewed  
Branches of palm, and garments white as snow  
From their immortal shoulders stripped; and wreaths  
Of flowers and gold and gems : and others spread  
Their skies of banners o'er Him, while they cried  
' Hosannah in the Highest !' Heaven ne'er saw  
Such jubilation, never heard such song.

Reaching the dazzling height, He first bowed down  
(All Angels bending mute and veiled the while),  
Paying His homage reverently to Him  
Who was His greater, since He made Himself  
Of reputation none, and took on Him  
A servant's form ; and thus He grateful spake :  
' I will Thee love, O Lord, My strength and song !  
For Thou hast heard My supplication's voice.  
Death's sorrows compassed Me ; the floods of men  
Ungodly, Me enclosed : the cords of Sin  
Surrounded Me : the pains of Hell gat hold.  
Thy face Thou didst hide from Me. Darkness was  
Thy secret place, and Thy pavilion  
Dark waters, and thick clouds that veiled the skies.  
In my distress I called on Thee, O God !  
And from Thy Temple Thou didst hear My voice.  
Thou liftedst up on Me Thy Countenance,  
And at Thy brightness clear the thick clouds passed,

Earth shook and trembled, and the hills were riven;  
For Thou wast wroth against Mine enemies.  
Thou sentest out Thine arrows, and they fled;  
Thy lightnings, and they were discomfited;  
The world's foundations were discovered then;  
The channels of the Deep were seen. Thou sent'st  
Thy chariot from above, and I did ride  
Upon Thy horses and the chariots  
Of Thy salvation. Through the sea I walked,  
The heap of waters great; the mountains saw,  
They trembled; and the deep gave forth his voice,  
And lifted up his hands: all through the waste  
I marched in indignation, and did thresh  
Mine enemies in anger: I pursued,  
I overtook, I turned not again  
Until they were confounded and consumed:  
Deliverance great Thou givest to Thy King,  
To David and his seed for evermore.'

He ended: and the Father graciously  
Received Him, saying: 'Sit at My right hand  
Until Thy footstool I make all Thy foes.  
For, as I live, to Thee all knees shall bow,  
All tongues shall swear, confessing Thou art Lord  
To glory of Thy Father. Thou must reign  
Till all things are put under Thee: Thy saints  
Shall be the willing subjects of Thy power;  
And they who will not serve shall fade away  
Out of their places at Thy majesty.'

Ask, I will give the heathen to Thy sway—  
Earth's uttermost for Thy possession. Lo,  
I set My King upon My holy hill ! Thy Throne  
For ever and for ever is ; and let  
All Angels worship Thee through all their hosts.'

Brake forth the exultations of the skies :  
' Gird on Thy sword upon Thy Sovereign thigh,  
Most mighty and most glorious Lord of Hosts !  
And in Thy majesty ride prosperously ;  
And Thy right hand shall teach Thee wondrous things.  
The heathen rage, the kingdoms moved are,  
Kings set themselves and rulers counsel take  
Against the Lord and His anointed One,  
Thus saying, " Let us break His bands in twain."  
But He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh ;  
The Lord shall have them in derision. Thou  
Shalt break them with a rod of iron ; Thou  
Shalt dash them like a potter's vessel. Let  
The potsherds of the earth with potsherds strive,  
But woe to him that striveth with his God.  
Therefore be wise, O Kings ; instructed be,  
Ye Judges of the earth. Kiss ye the Son,  
Lest He be angry, and ye be consumed,  
When kindled but a little is His wrath.'

The Son His Throne had taken. 'Twas the hill  
On which Heaven's bright Shekinah had been seen  
For ages countless as the Angels' years—

The brightness visible of that dread Face,  
Which, dwelling in its veil of light, no eye  
Had seen, nor could approach unto, itself  
Its own concealment—buried in its blaze ;  
And all intolerable, but for the cloud  
Which God had hung before it. But the veil  
Of His pure body interposing now,  
And shricing all the Godhead, filled their eyes  
With wonder and their hearts with ravishment.  
And when they saw the cloud lift up, and cast  
A rainbow round His face, which, like the sun,  
Was lit with brightness excellent, their joy  
They could not hold, and into song they burst :  
' Glory to Thee, Thou Son of God Most High !  
Thou Brightness of the Father's glory, Hail !  
Thou Express Image of His Person, Hail !  
Oft have we seen the Father's glory shine,  
But ne'er so clear or comforting as now.  
Far have we gone to learn His reverend Name—  
Creation's realms explored, and every world  
Have visited ; all ranks of being seen,  
All Nature's heights have soared, fathomed all depths,  
All mysteries have studied, and His works  
Sought out in His dominions everywhere.  
Nor knew we whether to admire the more  
His wondrous Knowledge or His glorious Power,  
The Might Omnipotent that rules the whole,  
Or the sweet Gentleness and tender Thought  
That nurtures each with a peculiar care ;

The Righteousness that reacheth to the clouds,  
Like the great mountains; or the Goodness strong  
That, like the eternal canopy of Heaven,  
Rests in its changeless purity and peace  
Upon those solemn summits; or the sea  
Of His great Judgments, that spread out beneath  
Blends in the mirror of its deep sublime  
The mountains' awful strength, immovable,  
The sky's eternal and unchanging calm—  
Heaven's unimpassionable countenance—  
The Nature which is only, *always Love!*  
From these excursions through Thy Father's works  
Glad have Thy sons returned; and rich as glad,  
With stores of knowledge new and praises new,  
Inspired by new discoveries; but we hail  
Thee, Son of God! Thou Image of His Face!  
A Person on the Throne, where Glory was  
But Person none, that finite eye could see.  
And gladly did we watch the radiant cloud  
Withdraw to make Thee room, then rise and weave  
An emerald rainbow round about Thy Head,  
While all the fulness of the God shone forth,  
And filled our hearts unto His fulness all.  
Accept our praises, Son of God, Most High!  
Worthy art Thou all blessings to receive  
And riches infinite; for Angels now  
Behold their Maker; all the sons of God  
Have seen their Father, and it doth suffice  
For evermore; and henceforth every world

Shall share the blessed privilege of earth ;  
And thrones, dominions, potentates and powers,  
And realms and beings, all unknown to men,  
Shall come on pilgrimage from every place,  
With joy and wonder, to behold the Man !'

They ceased, but Heaven's high arch with echoes long  
Resounded ; and each seraph harper drew  
His laurel from his brow, and cast it down  
With acclamations new—the fragrance filled  
The skies.

Then the redeemed took up the strain—  
The New Song singing, which no voice could learn  
But theirs, who were redeemed from the earth.  
Its notes the Angels charmed—so new the words,  
The voices so pathetic ; Heaven was still,  
As the lone grove when the sweet bird of night  
Shakes out her notes on the enchanted air,  
Wooing the virgin moon, while rocks, and woods,  
And hills are charmed, and the impatient winds  
Pause in the tree-tops, and suspend their breath  
To listen ; often too, beguiled, they drop  
Their burden, and among the branches sleep  
Till morn awakes them, and the charmer's voice  
Ceases its spell till eve. The sorrowless  
And sinless sons of God envied well-nigh  
Their younger brethren fallen, and almost  
Could wish that they might weep, to learn a song  
So sweet, so sweetly sung—and these the words :

'To Him that loved us, washed us in His blood,  
Be blessings infinite and ceaseless praise.'

Then spake the Son : ' Father, with Me well pleased  
Behold the children Thou hast given to Me !'

He answered with a smile, that on the Son  
In full effulgence fell from His dread Face  
Invisible—reflected thence on them  
To the same image changed ; while on their heads,  
Placed by His Omnipresent Hand, appeared  
A mitre and a crown : ' In My Beloved  
Accepted, lo ! I make them priests and kings  
For ever ; they before My face shall stand  
To offer spiritual sacrifice ;  
Themselves the sacrifice I choose, through Thee  
Acceptable ; and they shall walk with Thee  
In white ; and all who shall believe on Thee  
Shall to My kingdom come, with Thee to dwell  
And see Thy glory : never-ending train  
Of souls released from earth shall follow Thee  
Into Thy joy ; nor shall the gates be shut,  
Nor night, nor day, until Mine host elect  
Shall be complete. Then shall Thy joy be full,  
And Thou the travail of Thy soul shalt see  
With satisfaction infinite, and rest  
In Thy great love for ever. Thou shalt lead  
Them forth eternally to living streams :  
Joys ever fresh and everlasting, and

All memory of olden griefs and cares  
Thy God—their God—shall wipe away with bliss.  
Thou righteousness hast loved, therefore God  
Hath Thee anointed with His perfect joy—  
The joy before Thee set for which the Cross  
Thou didst endure, despising all the shame.  
To Thee committed is from this blest hour  
All judgment, rule, authority, and power ;  
At My right hand in heavenly places set,  
Far above principalities and thrones,  
And every name that's named ; for unto which  
Of these said I at any time, " Thou art  
My Son ; this day have I begotten Thee ?"  
Or this, " Sit Thou at My right hand until  
I make Thy foes Thy footstool ?" Were they not  
Created by Thee, for Thee, and to be  
Thine instruments in this transcendent work,  
Which from eternity determined was  
In the unchanging counsel of My will ?  
Lo ! they are Thine, Thy spirits ministering  
To serve the heirs of Thy salvation ; sent,  
Elder to serve the younger—morning-stars—  
To shine upon the prisoner's midnight cell,  
The wanderer's cave, the sufferer's bed of pain,  
The widow's hovel, and the martyr's fire.  
Where'er Thy persecuted or Thy poor  
Wander, or weep, or die, there shall these be ;  
Shall bear them in their hands through life's dark road,  
And to Thy bosom bring their souls to rest.



192 *The Cross Completed by the Judgment-seat.*

So great their sympathy with Thy blest work,  
That over every lone, repeating soul  
There shall be joy among their watching hosts,  
Less only than their triumph consummate,  
When all the saints, in their communion joined,  
Shall call the Angels brethren, and both be  
One fold with one great Shepherd evermore.  
All things shall serve Thee—wind, and flood, and flame  
All evils bring Thee good—war, waste, and death;  
All science minister in height and depth:  
All wealth shall flow to Thee, of Thought and Speech,  
Riches of Gold and Gifts, and Power and Love,  
Until Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done  
On earth below as in the heaven above.  
Then shalt Thou go, in all My glory clad,  
To Judge the quick and dead—Incarnate God  
To suffer once, Incarnate God to judge.  
And they who pierced Thee shall see Thee raised  
Upon Thy Judgment-seat, and they shall wail.  
And all these heavens that saw Thee on Thy Cross,  
Incarnate Mercy, honouring My Law,  
And said, “Mercy and Truth together meet,”  
Shall see Thee on Thy Throne, Incarnate Law,  
My Mercy justifying, and shall sing,  
“Justice and Peace have kissed each other”—all  
The Godhead magnified and crowned in Thee.  
While on Thy Head the skies shall break again  
In benedictions, and the worlds shall hear  
And melt away—“Thou art My Son beloved,

In Whom I am well pleased."

He ceased,  
And set upon His Forehead many crowns;  
Which blazed like towers of diamond and gold  
Upon a mountain reared, the Cynosure  
Of all the powers and potentates around,  
Who loud and long, with voices and with harps,  
His coronation celebrated; while  
With hope and expectation high, they looked  
For that great day of God — that Day of Days —  
When, His Redemption's mystery complete,  
The end should come, and God be ALL IN ALL.

THE END.

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1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 26